AVENGERS®

FEAR ITSELF™

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MARVEL

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A TIME OF UNCERTAINTY AND FEAR GRIPS THE WORLD.

SIN, THE DAUGHTER OF THE RED SKULL, HAS UNLEASHED AN ANCIENT EVIL INTO THE WORLD: THE FORGOTTEN ASGARDIAN GOD KNOWN ONLY AS THE SERPENT! WITH HIS HAMMER-WIELDING MINIONS, THE SERPENT DEVASTATES THE EARTH IN HIS MARCH TOWARDS REVENGE ON ODIN AND ASGARD.

SENSING THE SERPENT'S RETURN, ODIN ORDERS THE ASGARDIANS TO WITHDRAW FROM EARTH AND DRAGS HIS REBELLIOUS SON THOR WITH HIM.

SIN LEADS AN ATTACK ON THE U.S. CAPITAL, RAZING ALL IN THEIR PATH. HER BLOODY ARMY CONTINUES TO MARCH NORTH, TO NEW YORK, AND THE AVENGERS STAND IN THEIR WAY.

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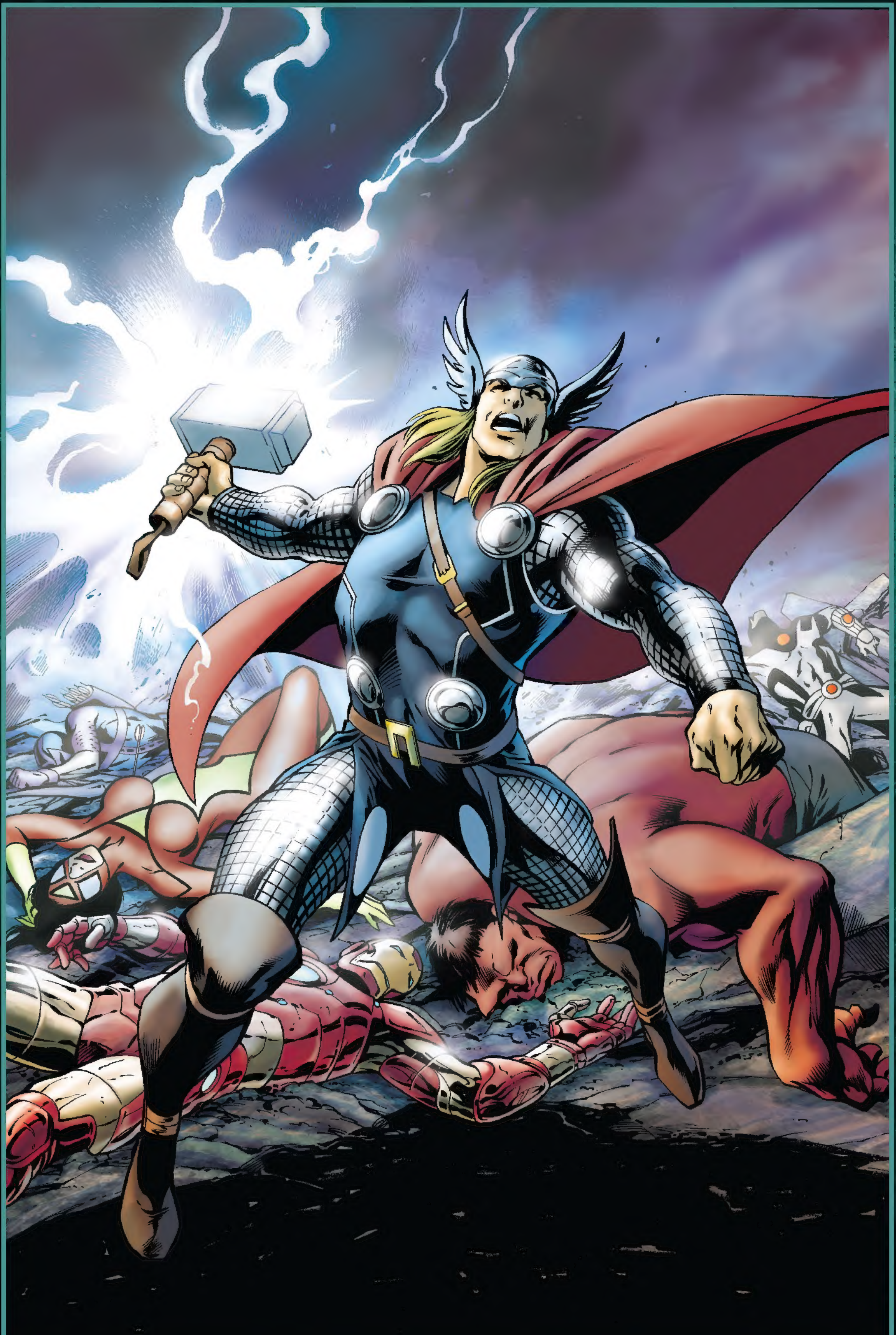
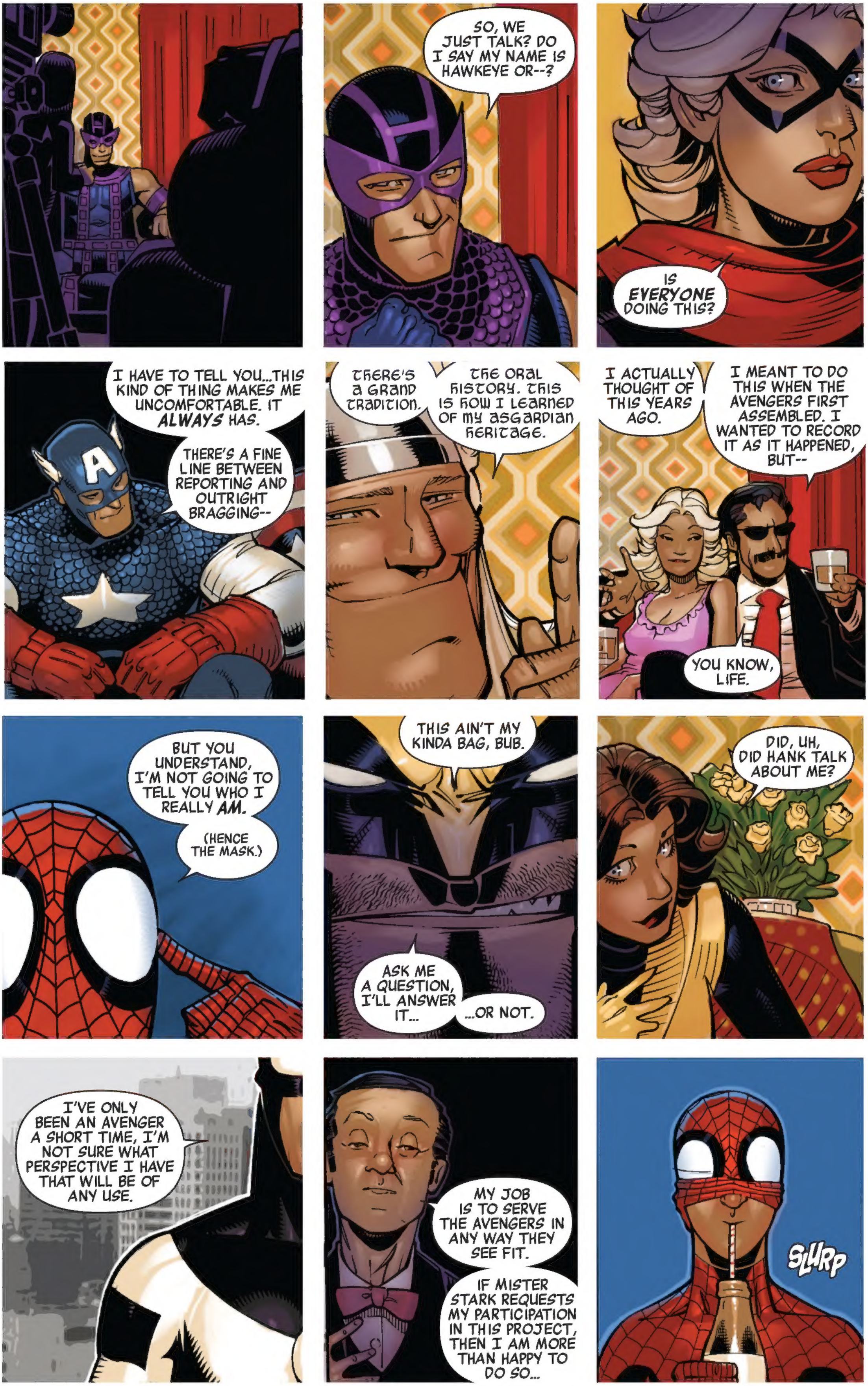
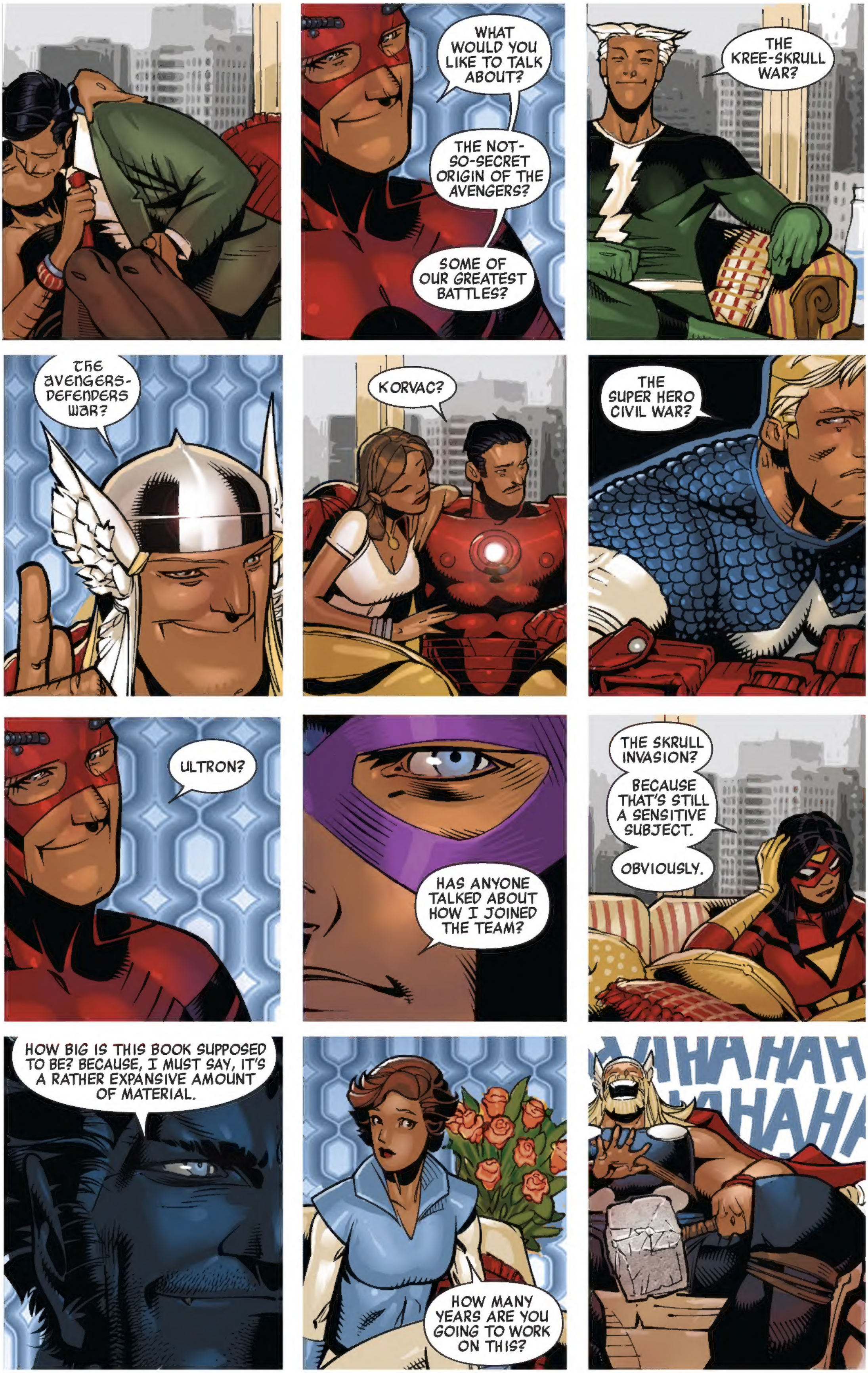
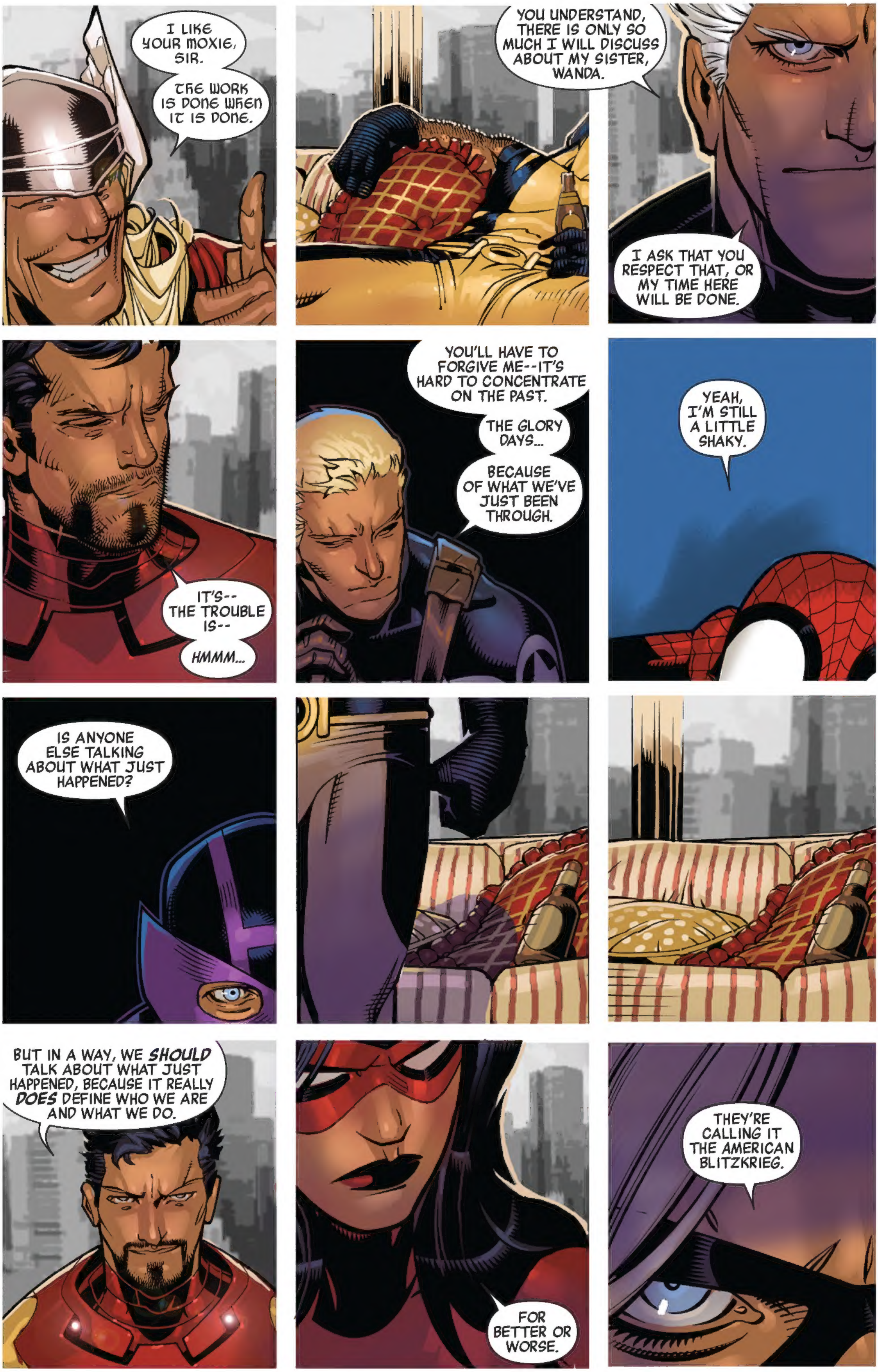
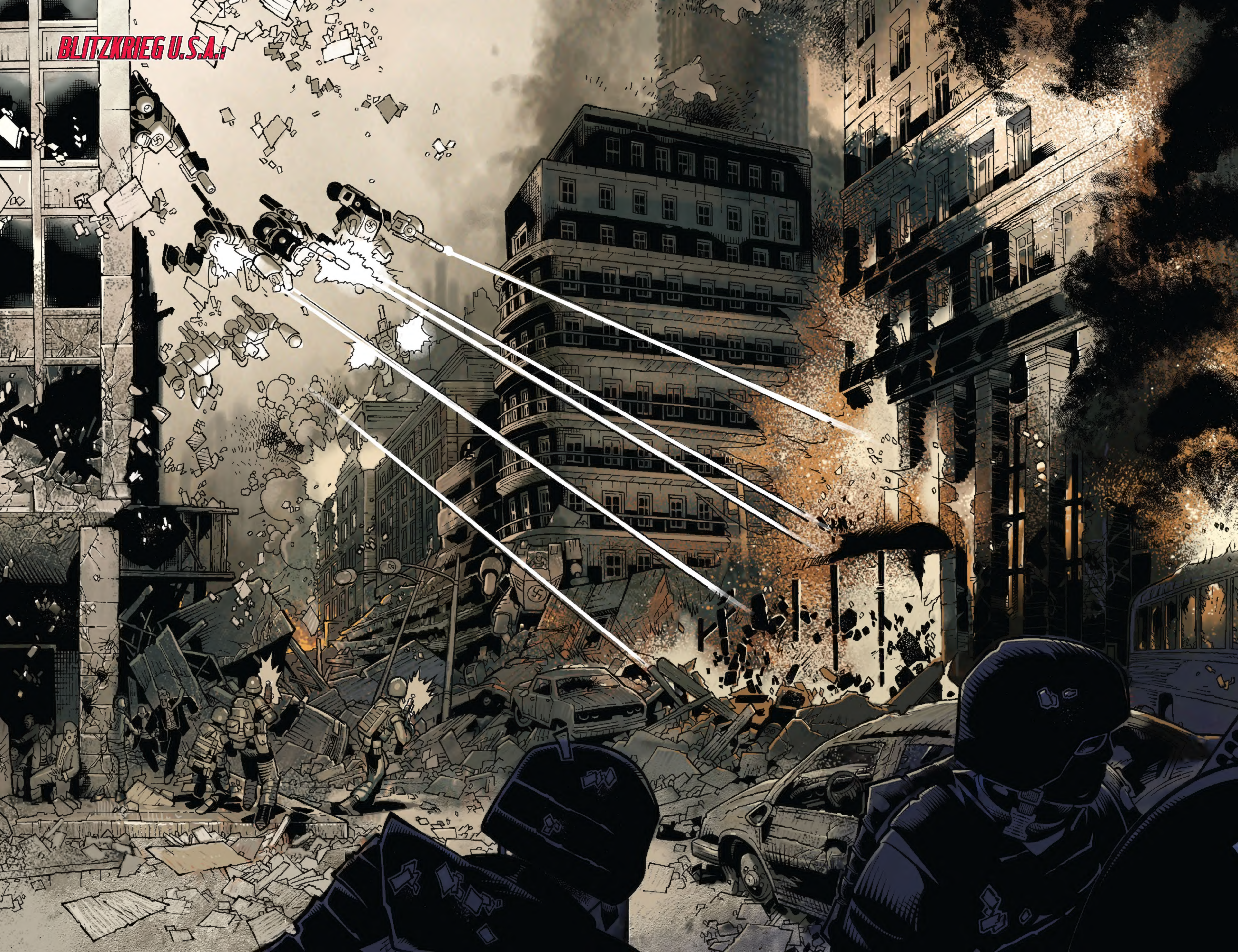


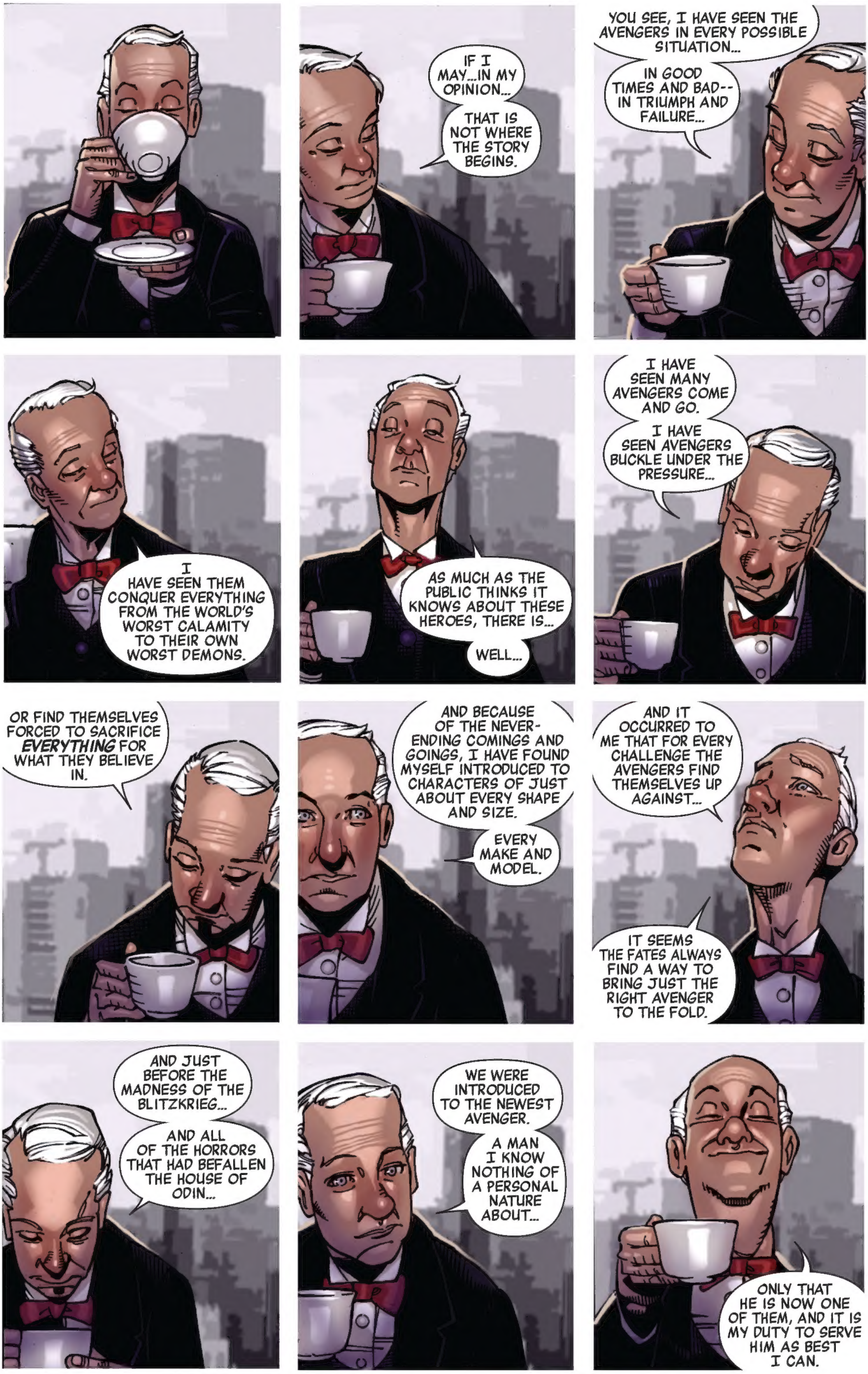
AVENGERS #13

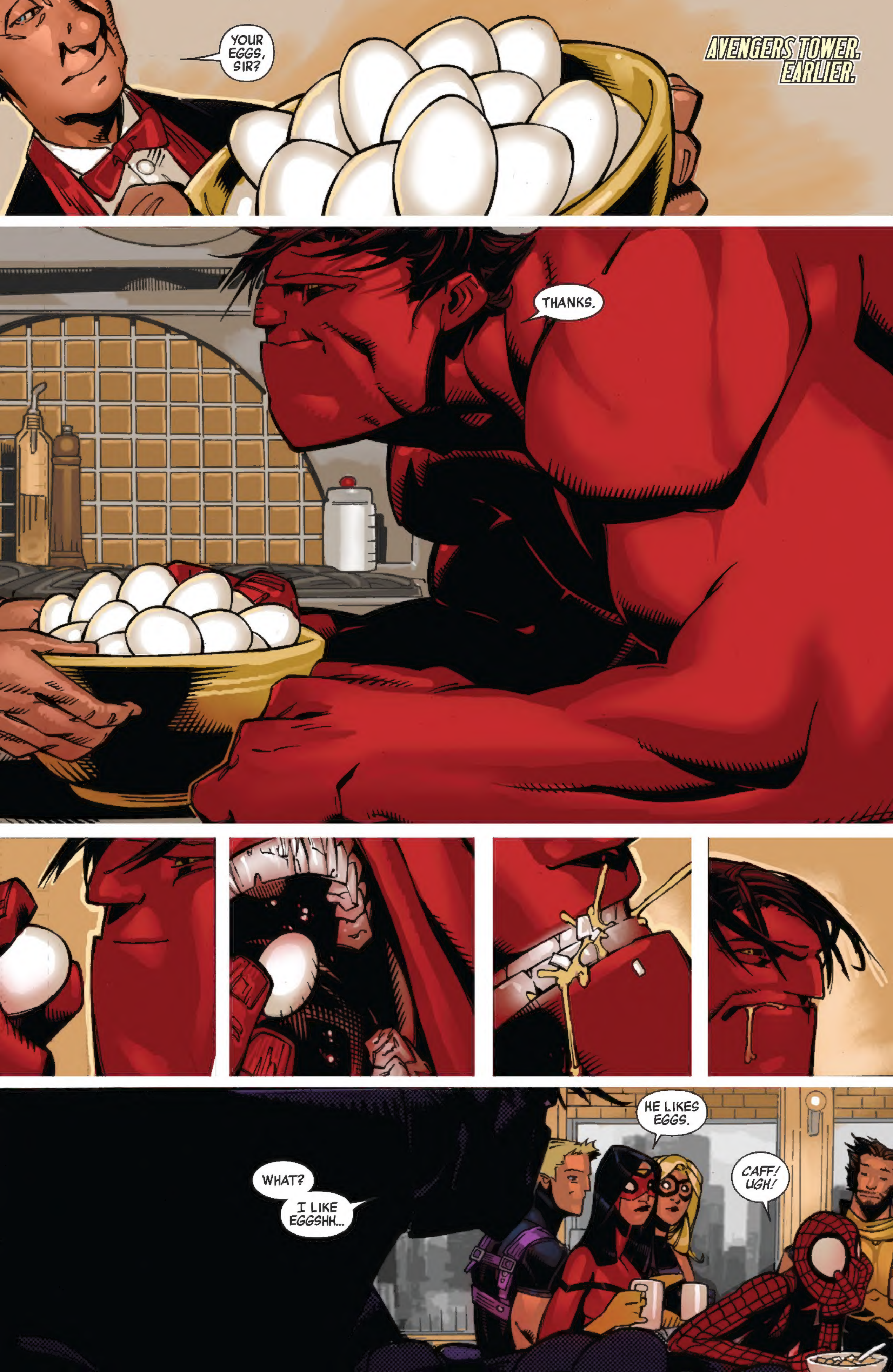

SO, WE JUST TALK? DO I SAY MY NAME IS HAWKEYE OR--?
IS *EVERYONE* DOING THIS?
I HAVE TO TELL YOU...THIS KIND OF THING MAKES ME UNCOMFORTABLE. IT *ALWAYS* HAS.
THERE'S A FINE LINE BETWEEN REPORTING AND OUTRIGHT BRAGGING--
THERE'S A GRAND TRADITION.
THE ORAL HISTORY. THIS IS HOW I LEARNED OF MY ASGARDIAN HERITAGE.
I ACTUALLY THOUGHT OF THIS YEARS AGO.
I MEANT TO DO THIS WHEN THE AVENGERS FIRST ASSEMBLED. I WANTED TO RECORD IT AS IT HAPPENED, BUT--
YOU KNOW, LIFE.
BUT YOU UNDERSTAND, I'M NOT GOING TO TELL YOU WHO I REALLY *AM*.
(HENCE THE MASK.)
THIS AIN'T MY KINDA BAG, BUB.
ASK ME A QUESTION, I'LL ANSWER IT...
...OR NOT.
DID, UH, DID HANK TALK ABOUT ME?
I'VE ONLY BEEN AN AVENGER A SHORT TIME, I'M NOT SURE WHAT PERSPECTIVE I HAVE THAT WILL BE OF ANY USE.
MY JOB IS TO SERVE THE AVENGERS IN ANY WAY THEY SEE FIT.
IF MISTER STARK REQUESTS MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROJECT, THEN I AM MORE THAN HAPPY TO DO SO...
SLURP

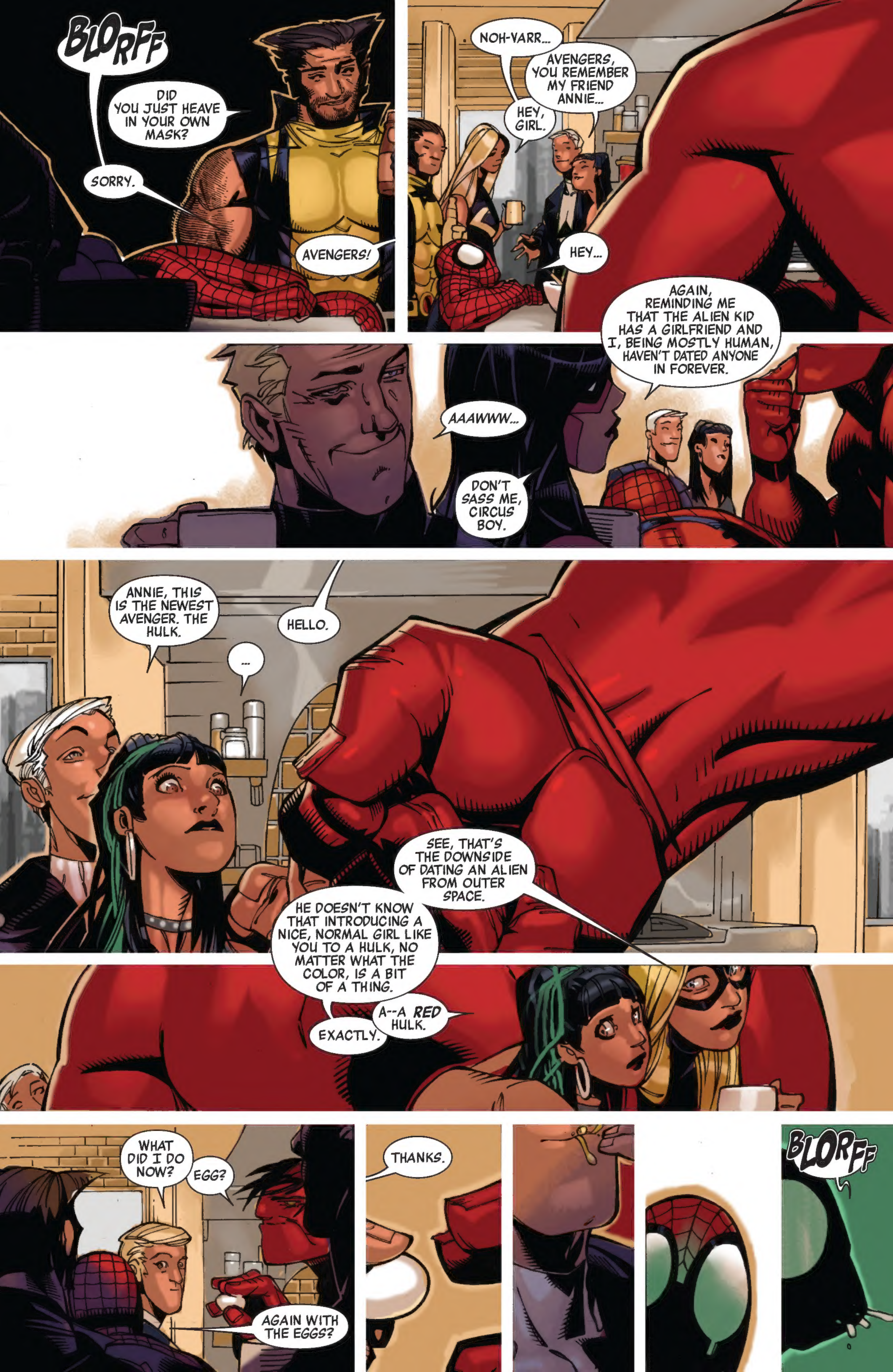

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO TALK ABOUT?
THE NOT-SO-SECRET ORIGIN OF THE AVENGERS?
SOME OF OUR GREATEST BATTLES?
THE KREE-SKRULL WAR?
THE AVENGERS-DEFENDERS WAR?
KORVAC?
THE SUPER HERO CIVIL WAR?
ULTRON?
HAS ANYONE TALKED ABOUT HOW I JOINED THE TEAM?
THE SKRULL INVASION?
BECAUSE THAT'S STILL A SENSITIVE SUBJECT.
OBVIOUSLY.
HOW BIG IS THIS BOOK SUPPOSED TO BE? BECAUSE, I MUST SAY, IT'S A RATHER EXPANSIVE AMOUNT OF MATERIAL.
HOW MANY YEARS ARE YOU GOING TO WORK ON THIS?
AHAHAH
HAHAHA

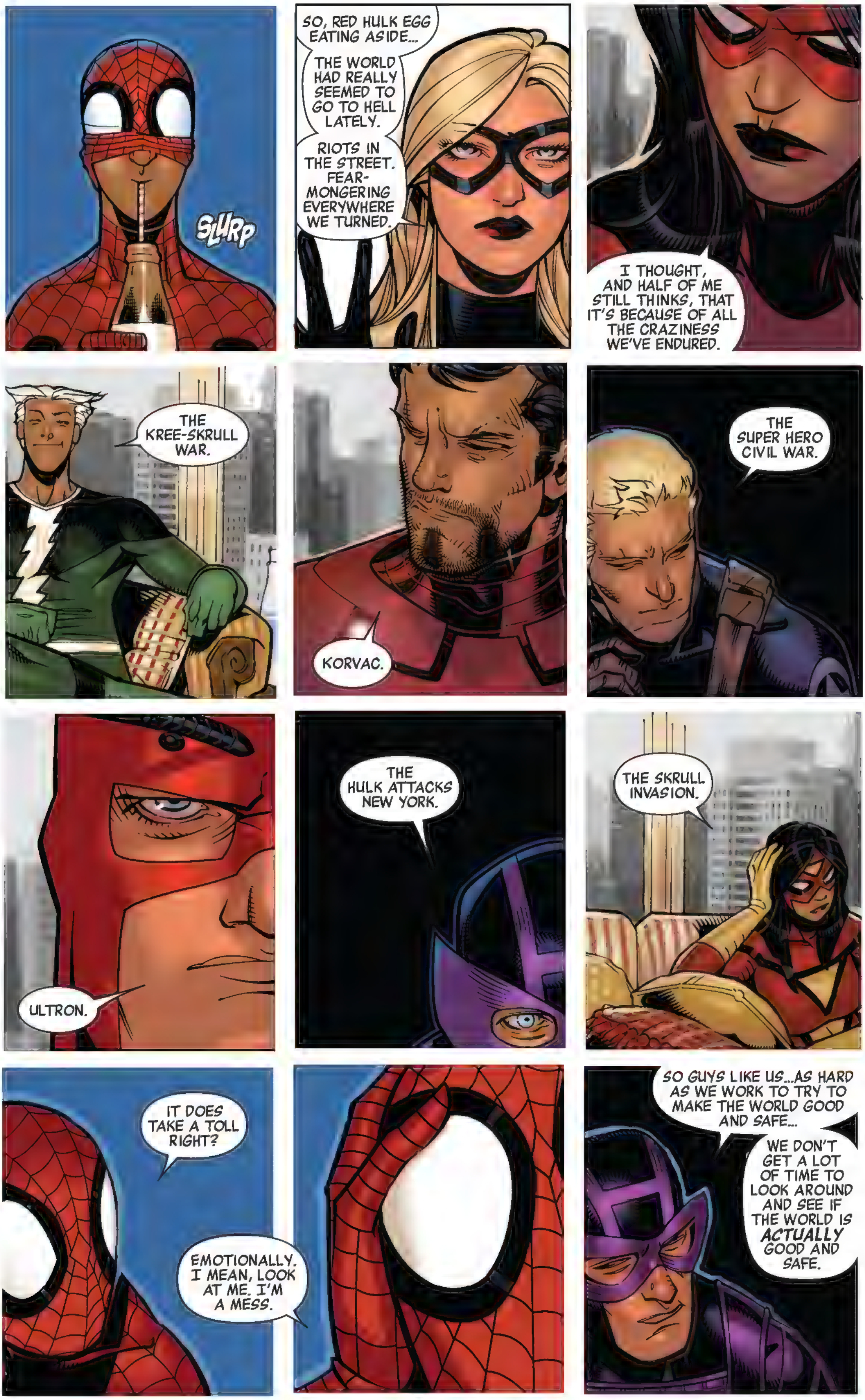

I LIKE YOUR MOXIE, SIR.
THE WORK IS DONE WHEN IT IS DONE.
YOU UNDERSTAND, THERE IS ONLY SO MUCH I WILL DISCUSS ABOUT MY SISTER, WANDA.
I ASK THAT YOU RESPECT THAT, OR MY TIME HERE WILL BE DONE.
IT'S-- THE TROUBLE IS--
HMMM...
YOU'LL HAVE TO FORGIVE ME--IT'S HARD TO CONCENTRATE ON THE PAST.
THE GLORY DAYS...
BECAUSE OF WHAT WE'VE JUST BEEN THROUGH.
YEAH, I'M STILL A LITTLE SHAKY.
IS ANYONE ELSE TALKING ABOUT WHAT JUST HAPPENED?
BUT IN A WAY, WE *SHOULD* TALK ABOUT WHAT JUST HAPPENED, BECAUSE IT REALLY *DOES* DEFINE WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO.
FOR BETTER OR WORSE.
THEY'RE CALLING IT THE AMERICAN BLITZKRIEG.

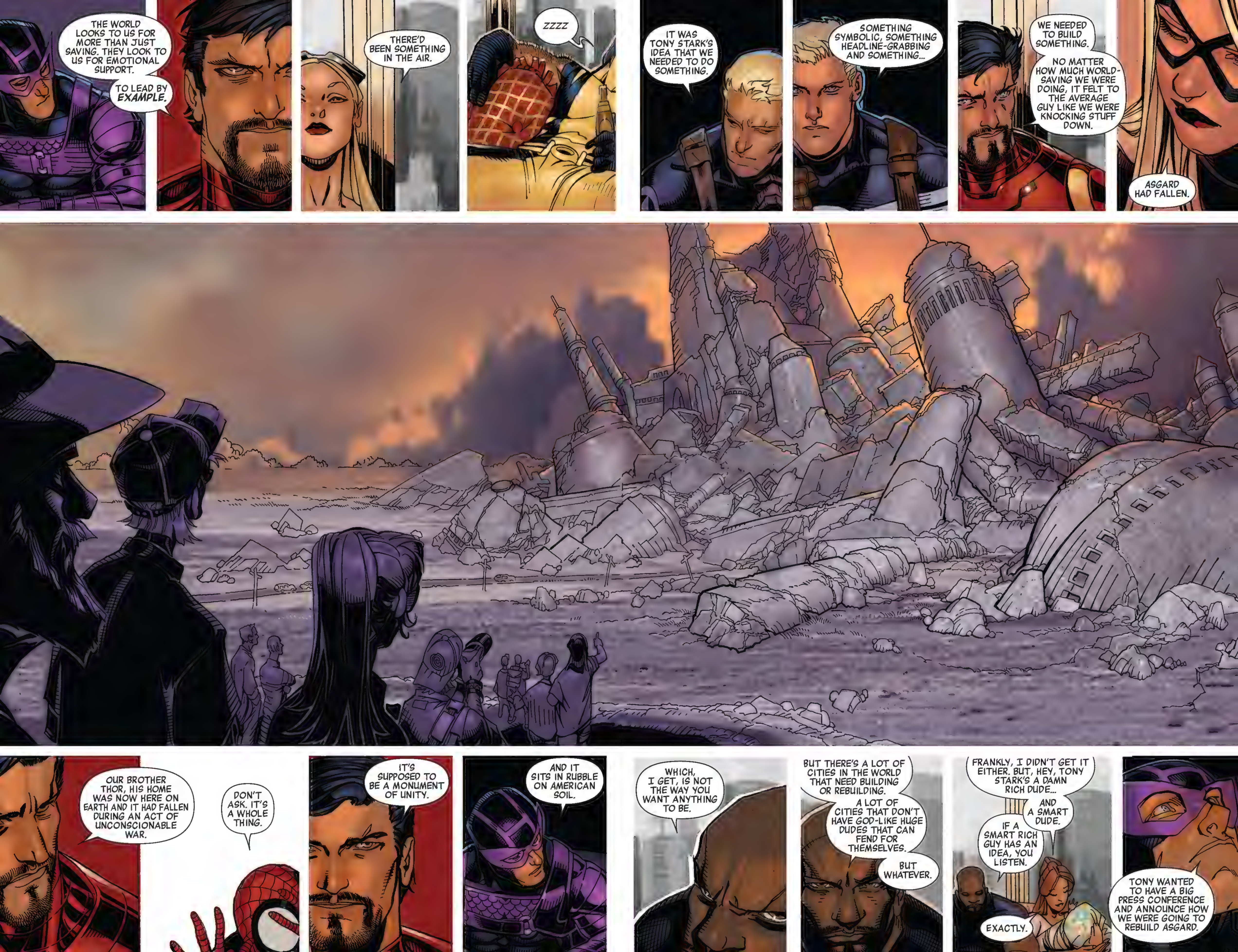

BLITZKRIEG U.S.A.:

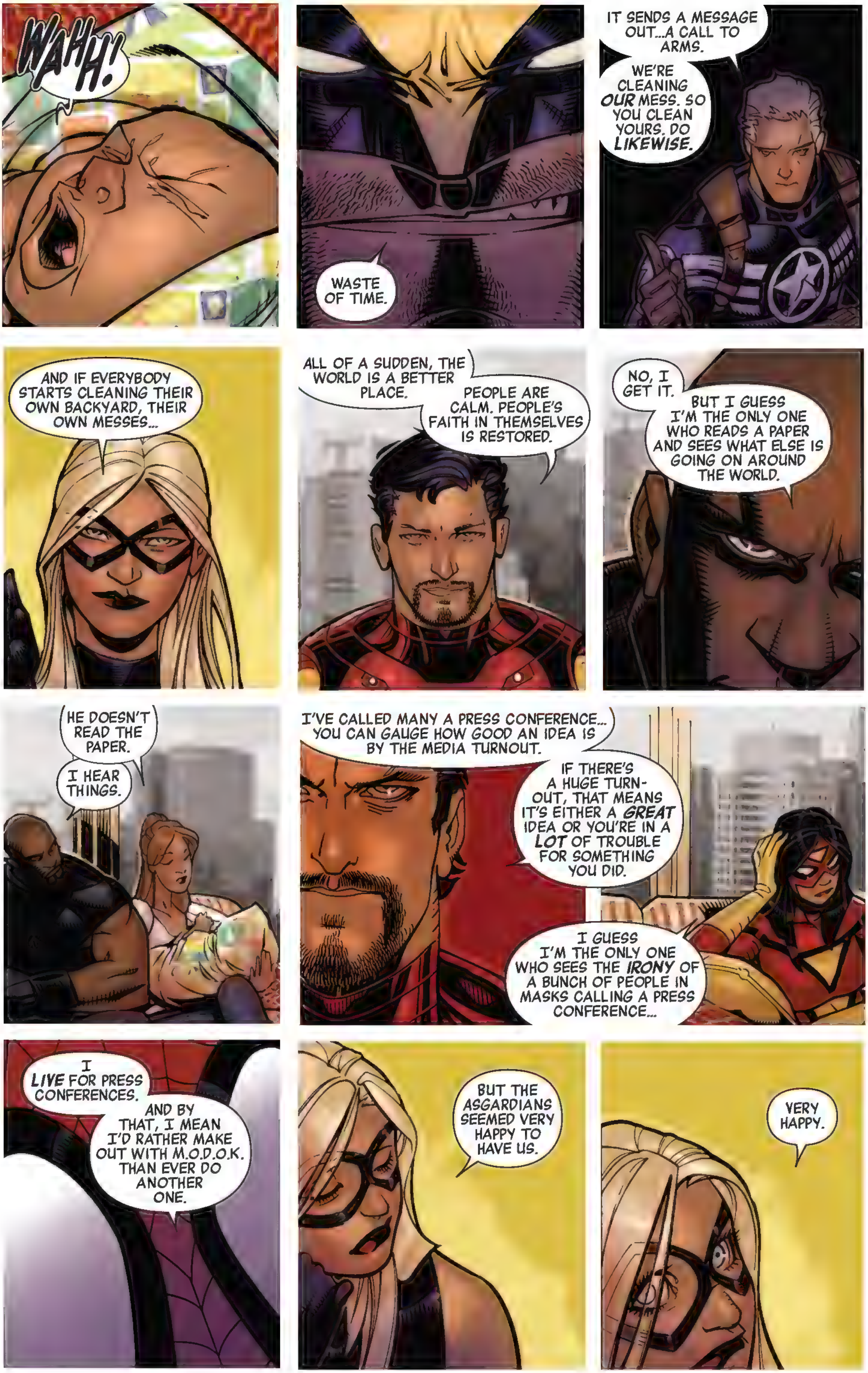

IF I MAY...IN MY OPINION...
THAT IS NOT WHERE THE STORY BEGINS.
YOU SEE, I HAVE SEEN THE AVENGERS IN EVERY POSSIBLE SITUATION...
IN GOOD TIMES AND BAD--IN TRIUMPH AND FAILURE...
I HAVE SEEN THEM CONQUER EVERYTHING FROM THE WORLD'S WORST CALAMITY TO THEIR OWN WORST DEMONS.
AS MUCH AS THE PUBLIC THINKS IT KNOWS ABOUT THESE HEROES, THERE IS...
WELL...
I HAVE SEEN MANY AVENGERS COME AND GO.
I HAVE SEEN AVENGERS BUCKLE UNDER THE PRESSURE...
OR FIND THEMSELVES FORCED TO SACRIFICE *EVERYTHING* FOR WHAT THEY BELIEVE IN.
AND BECAUSE OF THE NEVER-ENDING COMINGS AND GOINGS, I HAVE FOUND MYSELF INTRODUCED TO CHARACTERS OF JUST ABOUT EVERY SHAPE AND SIZE.
EVERY MAKE AND MODEL.
AND IT OCCURRED TO ME THAT FOR EVERY CHALLENGE THE AVENGERS FIND THEMSELVES UP AGAINST...
IT SEEMS THE FATES ALWAYS FIND A WAY TO BRING JUST THE RIGHT AVENGER TO THE FOLD.
AND JUST BEFORE THE MADNESS OF THE BLITZKRIEG...
AND ALL OF THE HORRORS THAT HAD BEFALLEN THE HOUSE OF ODIN...
WE WERE INTRODUCED TO THE NEWEST AVENGER.
A MAN I KNOW NOTHING OF A PERSONAL NATURE ABOUT...
ONLY THAT HE IS NOW ONE OF THEM, AND IT IS MY DUTY TO SERVE HIM AS BEST I CAN.

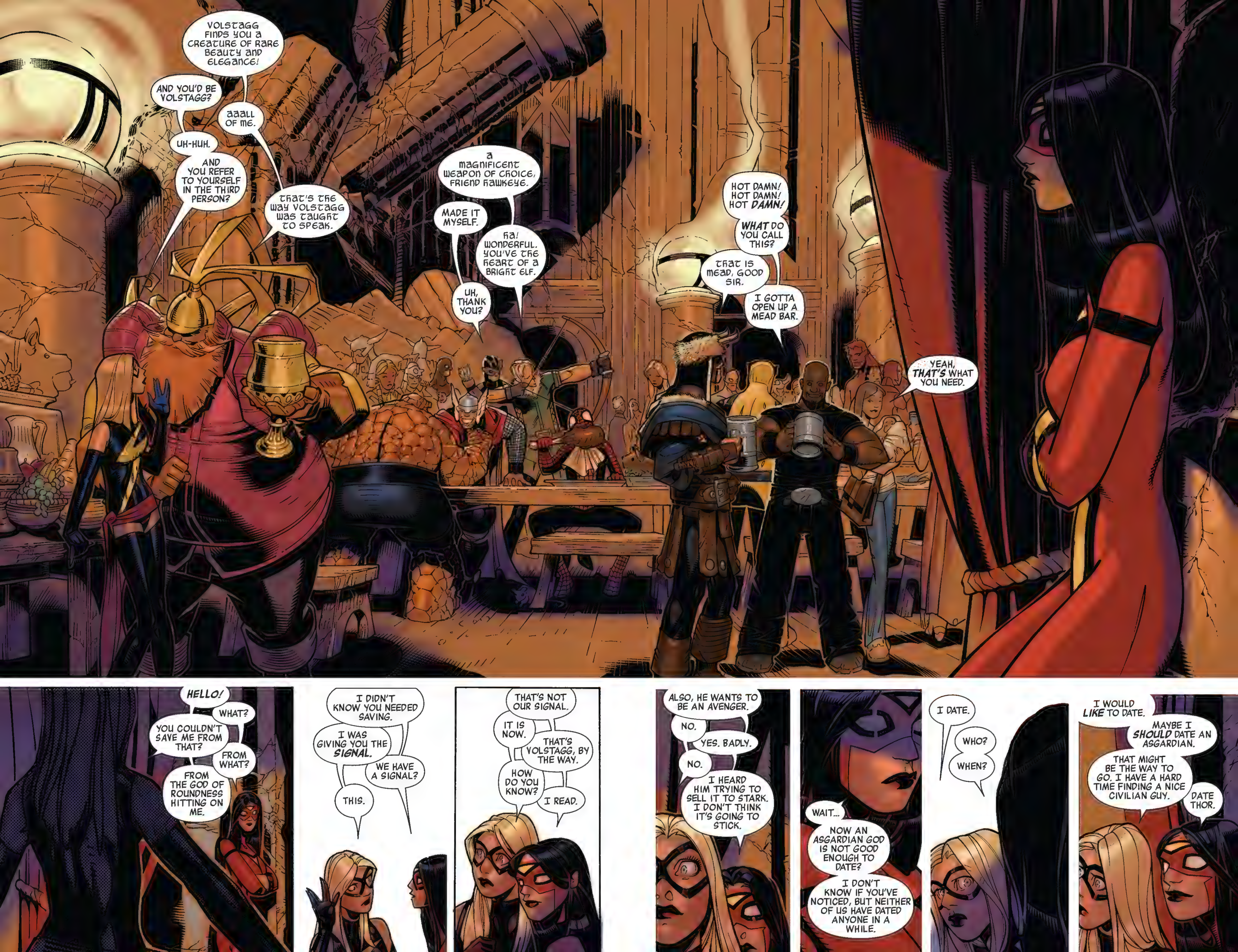

AVENGERS TOWER. EARLIER.
YOUR EGGS, SIR?
THANKS.
HE LIKES EGGS.
WHAT? I LIKE EGGSHH...
CAFF! UGH!

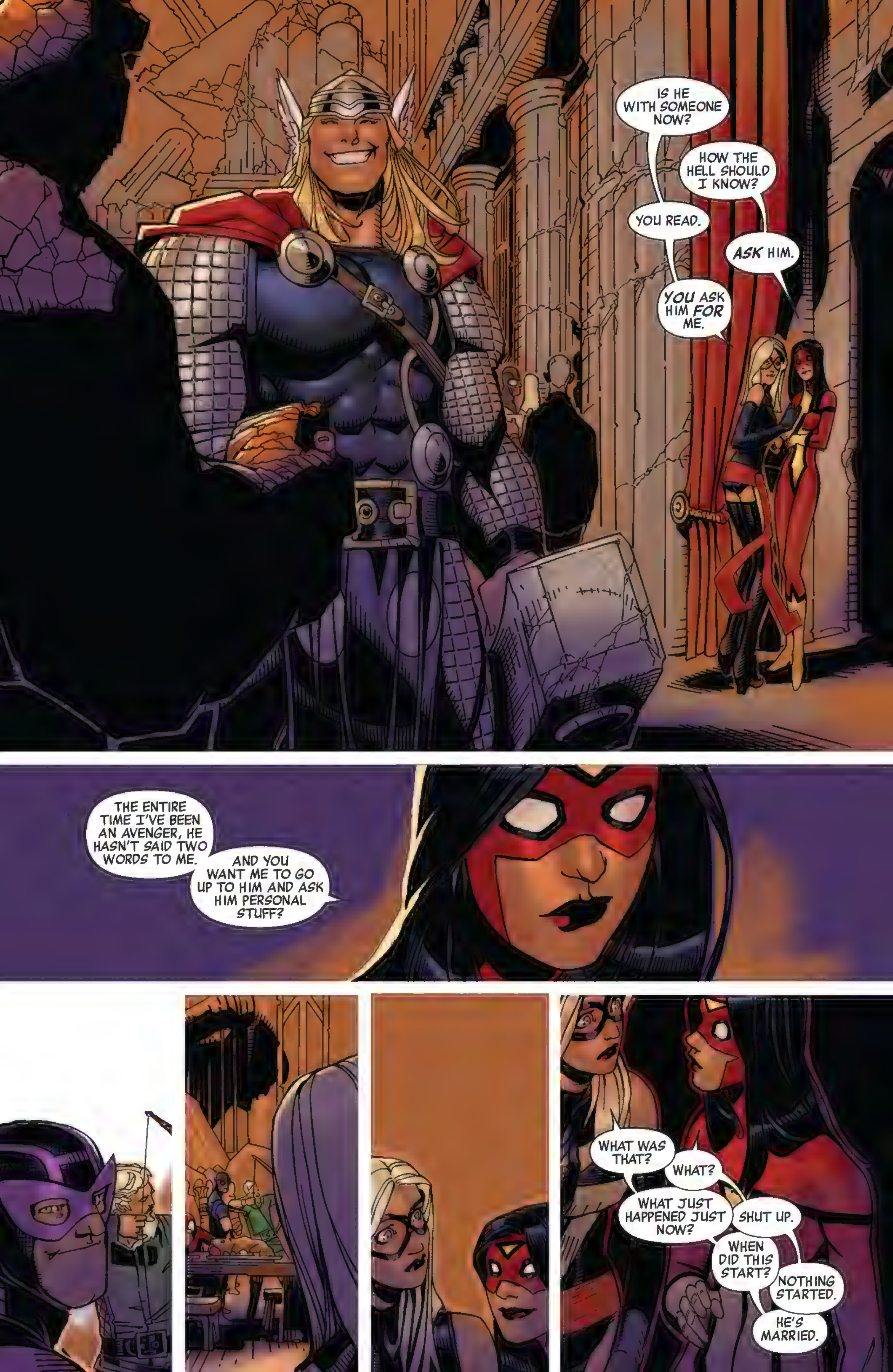

BLORFF
DID YOU JUST HEAVE IN YOUR OWN MASK?
SORRY.
AVENGERS!
NOH-VARR...
AVENGERS, YOU REMEMBER MY FRIEND ANNIE...
HEY, GIRL.
HEY...
AGAIN, REMINDING ME THAT THE ALIEN KID HAS A GIRLFRIEND AND I, BEING MOSTLY HUMAN, HAVEN'T DATED ANYONE IN FOREVER.
AAAWWW...
DON'T SASS ME, CIRCUS BOY.
ANNIE, THIS IS THE NEWEST AVENGER. THE HULK.
HELLO.
...
SEE, THAT'S THE DOWNSIDE OF DATING AN ALIEN FROM OUTER SPACE.
HE DOESN'T KNOW THAT INTRODUCING A NICE, NORMAL GIRL LIKE YOU TO A HULK, NO MATTER WHAT THE COLOR, IS A BIT OF A THING.
EXACTLY.
A--A RED HULK.
WHAT DID I DO NOW?
EGG?
AGAIN WITH THE EGGS?
THANKS.
BLORFF

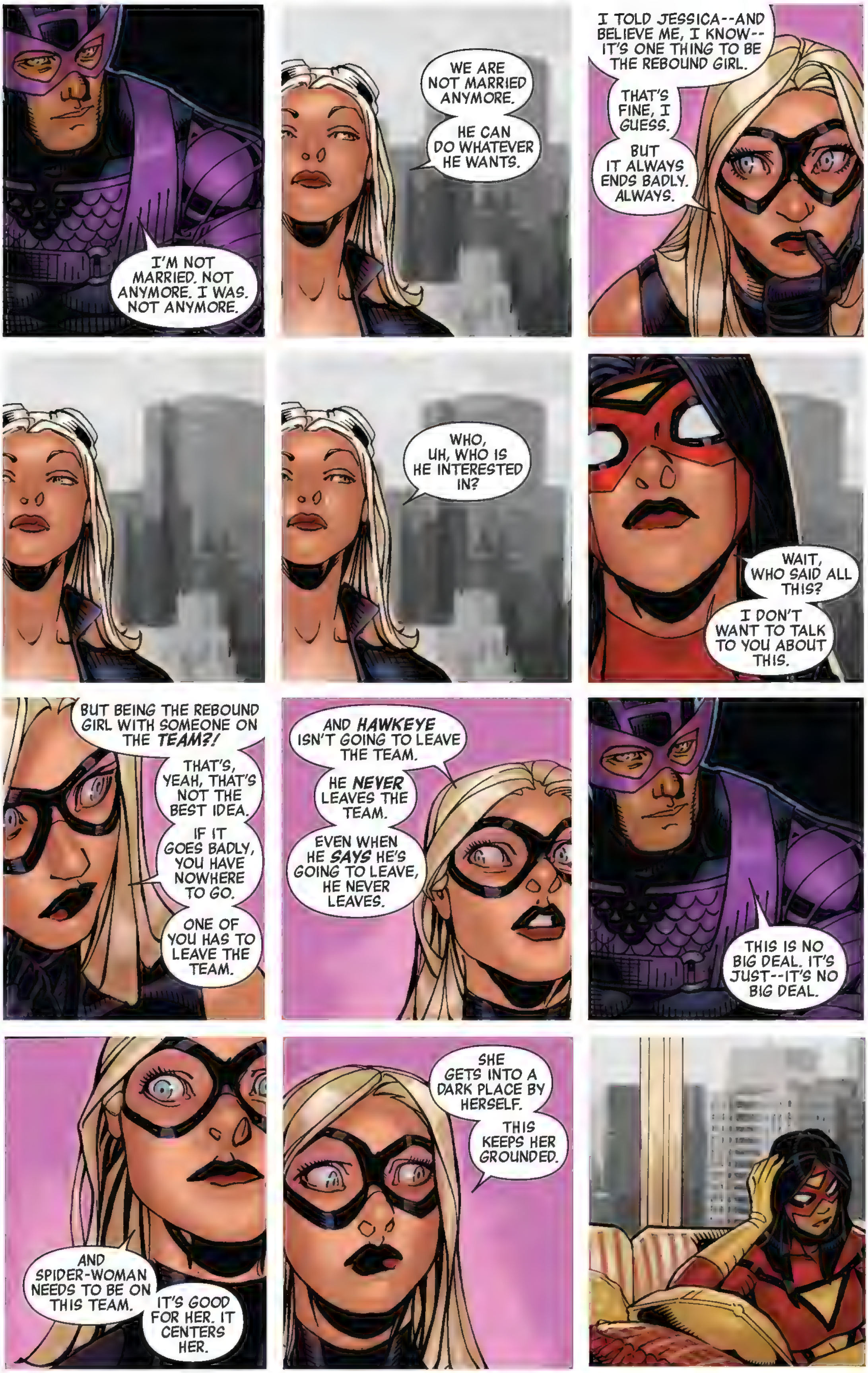

SLURP
SO, RED HULK EGG EATING ASIDE...
THE WORLD HAD REALLY SEEMED TO GO TO HELL LATELY.
RIOTS IN THE STREET. FEAR-MONGERING EVERYWHERE WE TURNED.
I THOUGHT, AND HALF OF ME STILL THINKS, THAT IT'S BECAUSE OF ALL THE CRAZINESS WE'VE ENDURED.
THE KREE-SKRULL WAR.
KORVAC.
THE SUPER HERO CIVIL WAR.
ULTRON.
THE HULK ATTACKS NEW YORK.
THE SKRULL INVASION.
IT DOES TAKE A TOLL RIGHT?
EMOTIONALLY. I MEAN, LOOK AT ME. I'M A MESS.
SO GUYS LIKE US...AS HARD AS WE WORK TO TRY TO MAKE THE WORLD GOOD AND SAFE...
WE DON'T GET A LOT OF TIME TO LOOK AROUND AND SEE IF THE WORLD IS *ACTUALLY* GOOD AND SAFE.

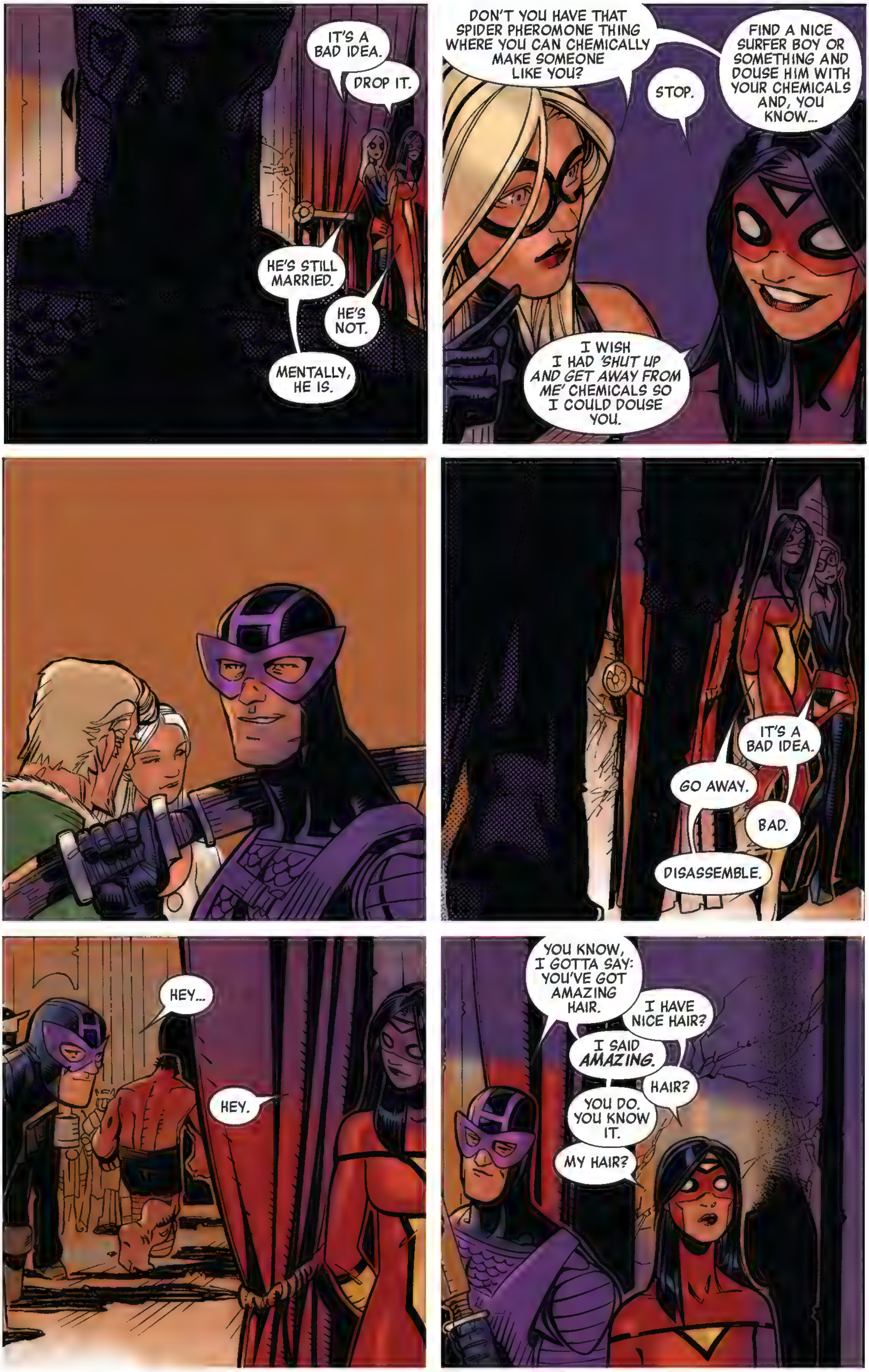

THE WORLD LOOKS TO US FOR MORE THAN JUST SAVING. THEY LOOK TO US FOR EMOTIONAL SUPPORT.
TO LEAD BY *EXAMPLE.*
THERE'D BEEN SOMETHING IN THE AIR.
ZZZZ
IT WAS TONY STARK'S IDEA THAT WE NEEDED TO DO SOMETHING.
SOMETHING SYMBOLIC, SOMETHING HEADLINE-GRABBING AND SOMETHING...
WE NEEDED TO BUILD SOMETHING.
NO MATTER HOW MUCH WORLD-SAVING WE WERE DOING, IT FELT TO THE AVERAGE GUY LIKE WE WERE KNOCKING STUFF DOWN.
ASGARD HAD FALLEN.
OUR BROTHER THOR, HIS HOME WAS NOW HERE ON EARTH AND IT HAD FALLEN DURING AN ACT OF UNCONSCIONABLE WAR.
DON'T ASK. IT'S A WHOLE THING.
IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE A MONUMENT OF UNITY.
AND IT SITS IN RUBBLE ON AMERICAN SOIL.
WHICH, I GET, IS NOT THE WAY YOU WANT ANYTHING TO BE.
BUT THERE'S A LOT OF CITIES IN THE WORLD THAT NEED BUILDING OR REBUILDING.
A LOT OF CITIES THAT DON'T HAVE GOD-LIKE HUGE DUDES THAT CAN FEND FOR THEMSELVES.
BUT WHATEVER.
FRANKLY, I DIDN'T GET IT EITHER. BUT, HEY, TONY STARK'S A DAMN RICH DUDE...
AND A SMART DUDE.
IF A SMART RICH GUY HAS AN IDEA, YOU LISTEN.
EXACTLY.
TONY WANTED TO HAVE A BIG PRESS CONFERENCE AND ANNOUNCE HOW WE WERE GOING TO REBUILD ASGARD.

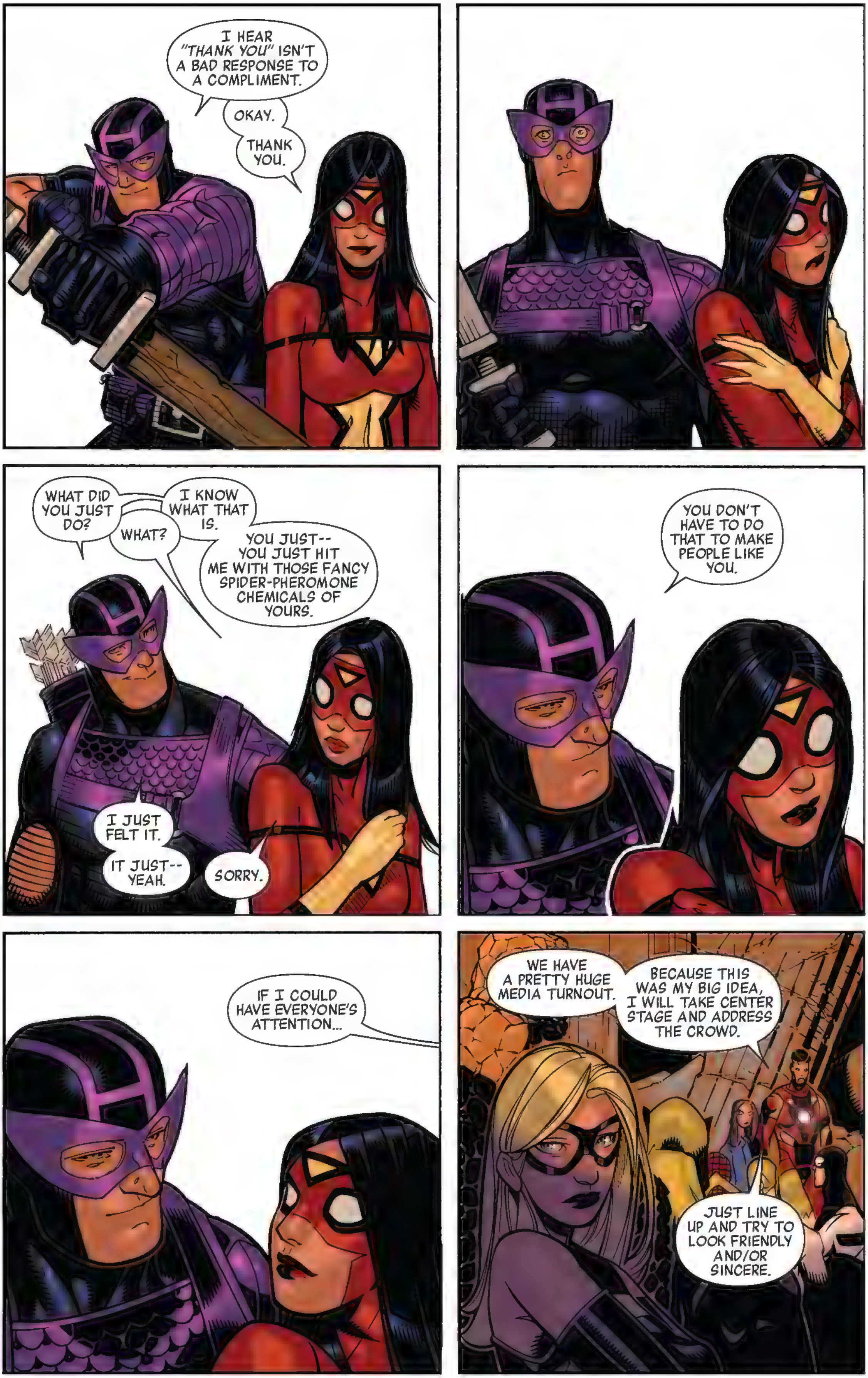

WAHH!
WASTE OF TIME.
IT SENDS A MESSAGE OUT...A CALL TO ARMS.
WE'RE CLEANING OUR MESS. SO YOU CLEAN YOURS. DO LIKEWISE.
AND IF EVERYBODY STARTS CLEANING THEIR OWN BACKYARD, THEIR OWN MESSES...
ALL OF A SUDDEN, THE WORLD IS A BETTER PLACE.
PEOPLE ARE CALM. PEOPLE'S FAITH IN THEMSELVES IS RESTORED.
NO, I GET IT.
BUT I GUESS I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO READS A PAPER AND SEES WHAT ELSE IS GOING ON AROUND THE WORLD.
HE DOESN'T READ THE PAPER.
I HEAR THINGS.
I'VE CALLED MANY A PRESS CONFERENCE... YOU CAN GAUGE HOW GOOD AN IDEA IS BY THE MEDIA TURNOUT.
IF THERE'S A HUGE TURN-OUT, THAT MEANS IT'S EITHER A GREAT IDEA OR YOU'RE IN A LOT OF TROUBLE FOR SOMETHING YOU DID.
I GUESS I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO SEES THE IRONY OF A BUNCH OF PEOPLE IN MASKS CALLING A PRESS CONFERENCE...
I LIVE FOR PRESS CONFERENCES.
AND BY THAT, I MEAN I'D RATHER MAKE OUT WITH M.O.D.O.K. THAN EVER DO ANOTHER ONE.
BUT THE ASGARDIANS SEEMED VERY HAPPY TO HAVE US.
VERY HAPPY.

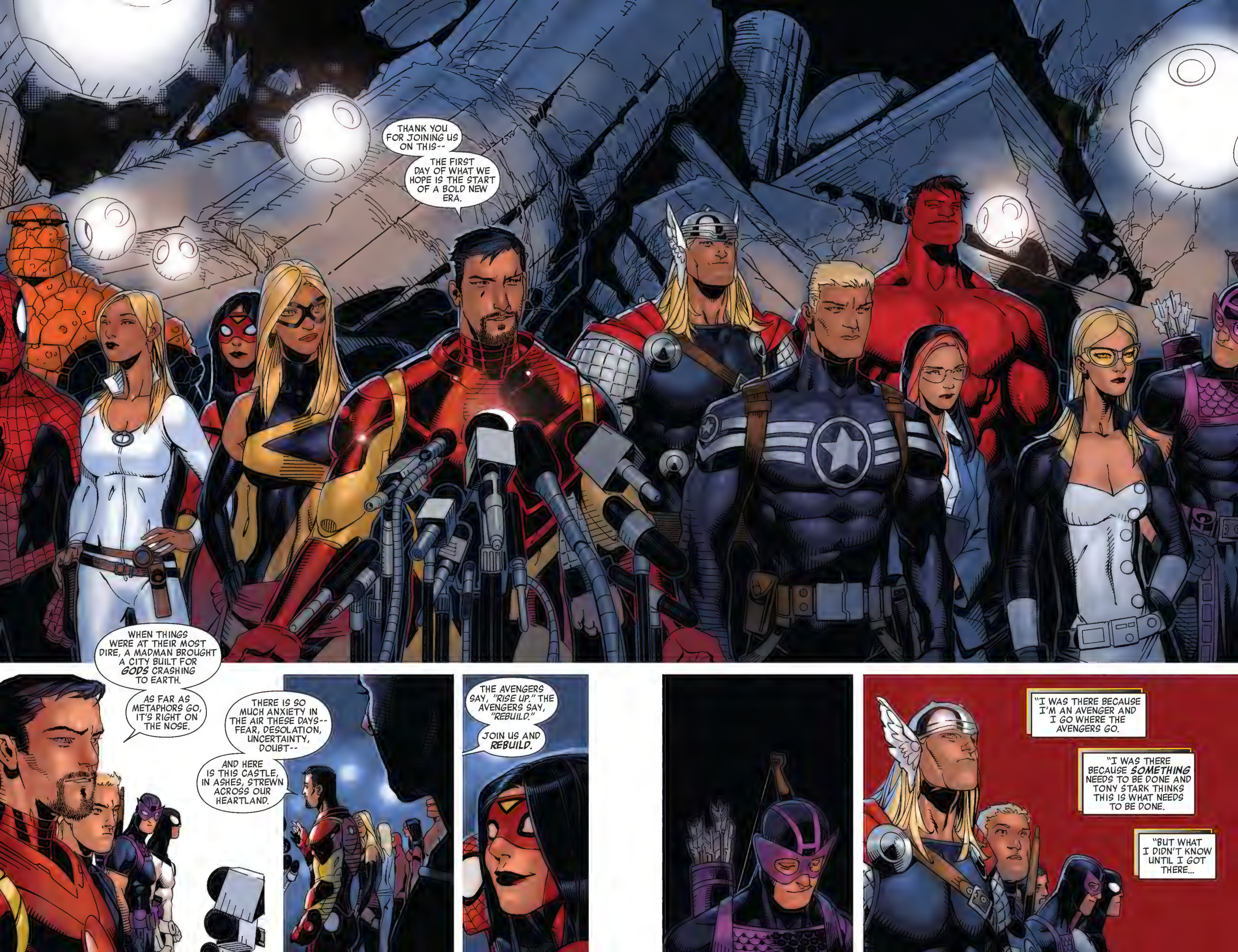

VOLSTAGG FINDS YOU A CREATURE OF RARE BEAUTY AND ELEGANCE!
AND YOU'D BE VOLSTAGG?
AAALL OF ME.
UH-HUH.
AND YOU REFER TO YOURSELF IN THE THIRD PERSON?
THAT'S THE WAY VOLSTAGG WAS TAUGHT TO SPEAK.
A MAGNIFICENT WEAPON OF CHOICE, FRIEND HAWKEYE.
MADE IT MYSELF.
HA! WONDERFUL. YOU'VE THE HEART OF A BRIGHT ELF.
UH, THANK YOU?
HOT DAMN! HOT DAMN! HOT **DAMN!**
WHAT DO YOU CALL THIS?
THAT IS MEAD, GOOD SIR.
I GOTTA OPEN UP A MEAD BAR.
YEAH, **THAT'S** WHAT YOU NEED.
HELLO!
WHAT?
YOU COULDN'T SAVE ME FROM THAT?
FROM WHAT?
FROM THE GOD OF ROUNDNESS HITTING ON ME.
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU NEEDED SAVING.
I WAS GIVING YOU THE **SIGNAL.**
WE HAVE A SIGNAL?
THIS.
THAT'S NOT OUR SIGNAL.
IT IS NOW.
THAT'S VOLSTAGG, BY THE WAY.
HOW DO YOU KNOW?
I READ.
ALSO, HE WANTS TO BE AN AVENGER.
NO.
YES. BADLY.
NO.
I HEARD HIM TRYING TO SELL IT TO STARK. I DON'T THINK IT'S GOING TO STICK.
WAIT...
NOW AN ASGARDIAN GOD IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO DATE?
I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'VE NOTICED, BUT NEITHER OF US HAVE DATED ANYONE IN A WHILE.
I DATE.
WHO?
WHEN?
I WOULD **LIKE** TO DATE.
MAYBE I **SHOULD** DATE AN ASGARDIAN.
THAT MIGHT BE THE WAY TO GO. I HAVE A HARD TIME FINDING A NICE CIVILIAN GUY.
DATE THOR.

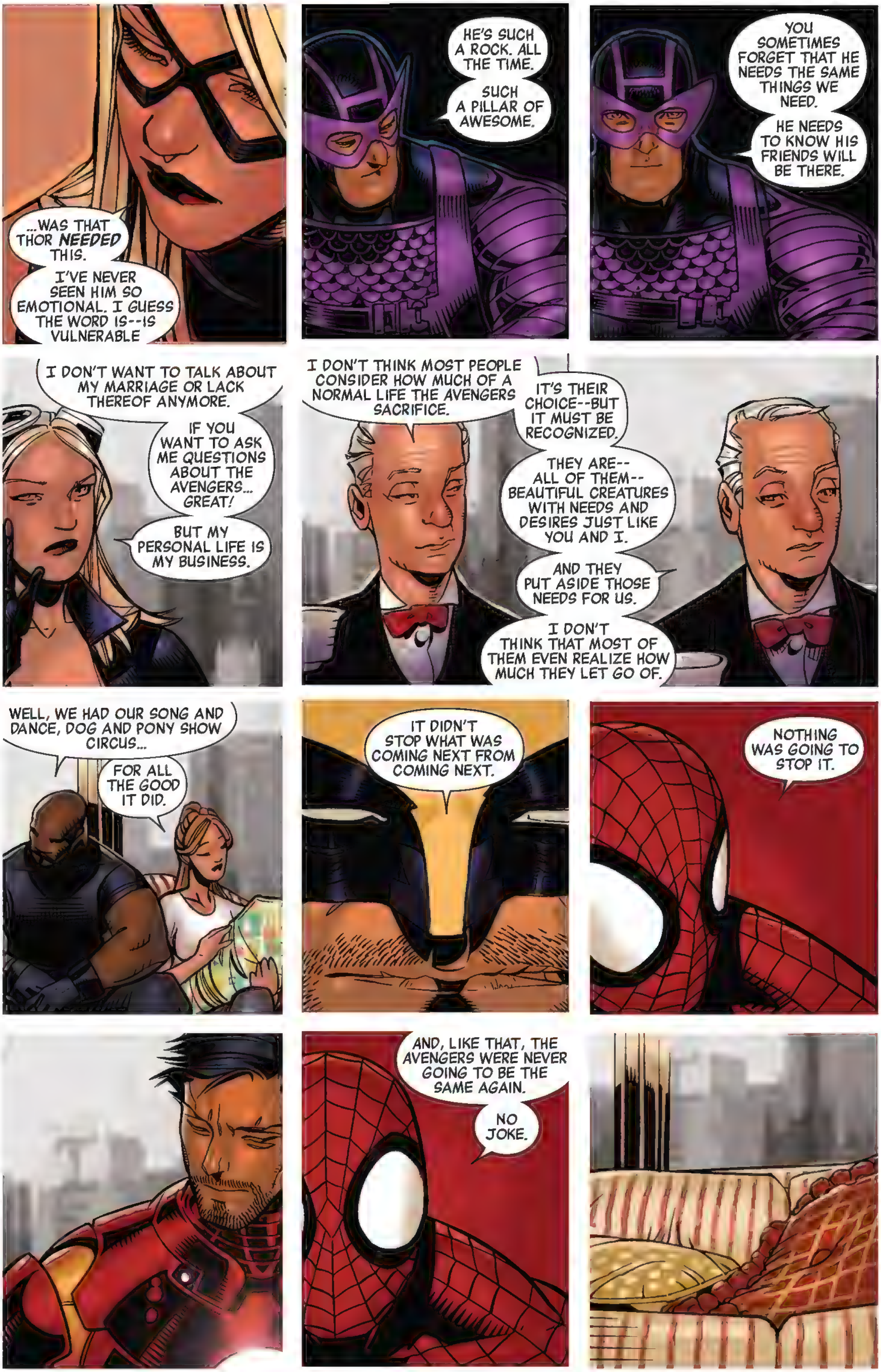

IS HE WITH SOMEONE NOW?
HOW THE HELL SHOULD I KNOW?
YOU READ.
ASK HIM.
YOU ASK HIM FOR ME.
THE ENTIRE TIME I'VE BEEN AN AVENGER, HE HASN'T SAID TWO WORDS TO ME.
AND YOU WANT ME TO GO UP TO HIM AND ASK HIM PERSONAL STUFF?
WHAT WAS THAT?
WHAT?
WHAT JUST HAPPENED JUST NOW?
SHUT UP.
WHEN DID THIS START?
NOTHING STARTED.
HE'S MARRIED.

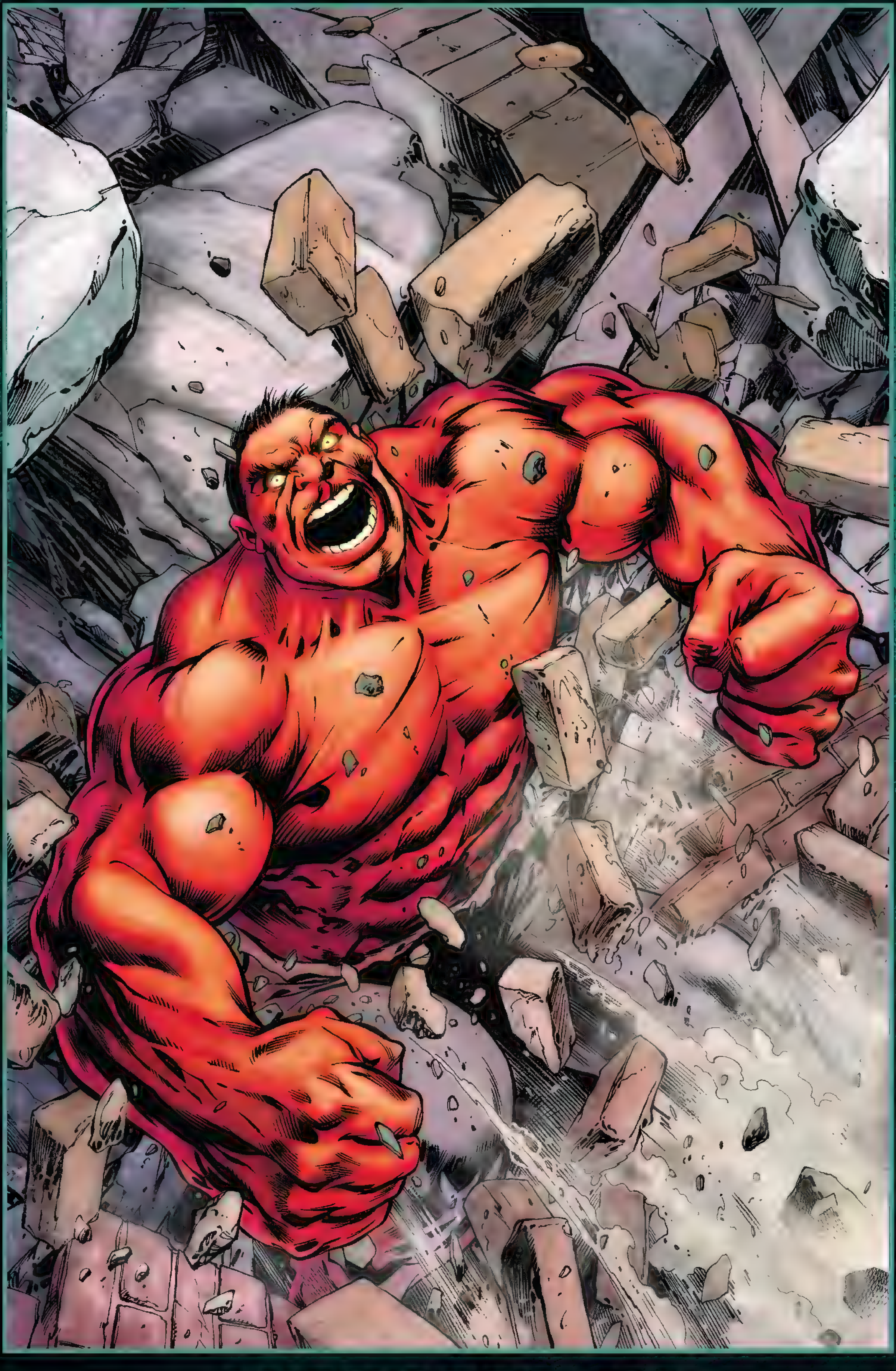

I'M NOT MARRIED. NOT ANYMORE. I WAS. NOT ANYMORE.
WE ARE NOT MARRIED ANYMORE.
HE CAN DO WHATEVER HE WANTS.
I TOLD JESSICA--AND BELIEVE ME, I KNOW--IT'S ONE THING TO BE THE REBOUND GIRL.
THAT'S FINE, I GUESS.
BUT IT ALWAYS ENDS BADLY. ALWAYS.
WHO, UH, WHO IS HE INTERESTED IN?
WAIT, WHO SAID ALL THIS?
I DON'T WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THIS.
BUT BEING THE REBOUND GIRL WITH SOMEONE ON THE *TEAM?!*
THAT'S, YEAH, THAT'S NOT THE BEST IDEA.
IF IT GOES BADLY, YOU HAVE NOWHERE TO GO.
ONE OF YOU HAS TO LEAVE THE TEAM.
AND **HAWKEYE** ISN'T GOING TO LEAVE THE TEAM.
HE **NEVER** LEAVES THE TEAM.
EVEN WHEN HE **SAYS** HE'S GOING TO LEAVE, HE NEVER LEAVES.
THIS IS NO BIG DEAL. IT'S JUST--IT'S NO BIG DEAL.
AND SPIDER-WOMAN NEEDS TO BE ON THIS TEAM.
IT'S GOOD FOR HER. IT CENTERS HER.
SHE GETS INTO A DARK PLACE BY HERSELF.
THIS KEEPS HER GROUNDED.


IT'S A BAD IDEA.
DROP IT.
HE'S STILL MARRIED.
HE'S NOT.
MENTALLY, HE IS.
DON'T YOU HAVE THAT SPIDER PHEROMONE THING WHERE YOU CAN CHEMICALLY MAKE SOMEONE LIKE YOU?
STOP.
FIND A NICE SURFER BOY OR SOMETHING AND DOUSE HIM WITH YOUR CHEMICALS AND, YOU KNOW...
I WISH I HAD *'SHUT UP AND GET AWAY FROM ME'* CHEMICALS SO I COULD DOUSE YOU.
IT'S A BAD IDEA.
GO AWAY.
BAD.
DISASSEMBLE.
HEY...
HEY.
YOU KNOW, I GOTTA SAY: YOU'VE GOT AMAZING HAIR.
I HAVE NICE HAIR?
I SAID *AMAZING.*
HAIR?
YOU DO. YOU KNOW IT.
MY HAIR?

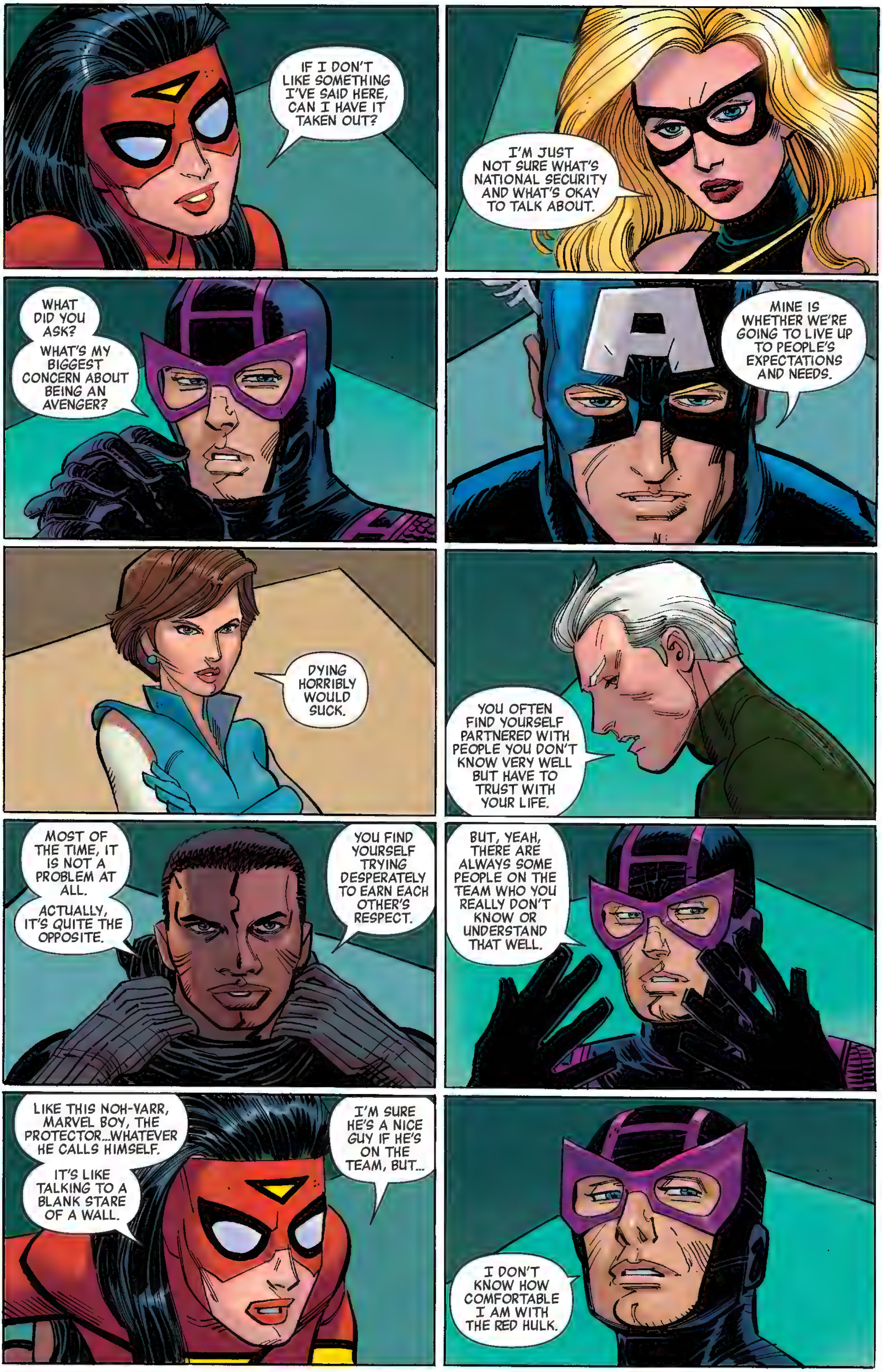

I HEAR "THANK YOU" ISN'T A BAD RESPONSE TO A COMPLIMENT.
OKAY.
THANK YOU.
WHAT DID YOU JUST DO?
I KNOW WHAT THAT IS.
WHAT?
YOU JUST-- YOU JUST HIT ME WITH THOSE FANCY SPIDER-PHEROMONE CHEMICALS OF YOURS.
I JUST FELT IT.
IT JUST-- YEAH.
SORRY.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THAT TO MAKE PEOPLE LIKE YOU.
IF I COULD HAVE EVERYONE'S ATTENTION...
WE HAVE A PRETTY HUGE MEDIA TURNOUT.
BECAUSE THIS WAS MY BIG IDEA, I WILL TAKE CENTER STAGE AND ADDRESS THE CROWD.
JUST LINE UP AND TRY TO LOOK FRIENDLY AND/OR SINCERE.

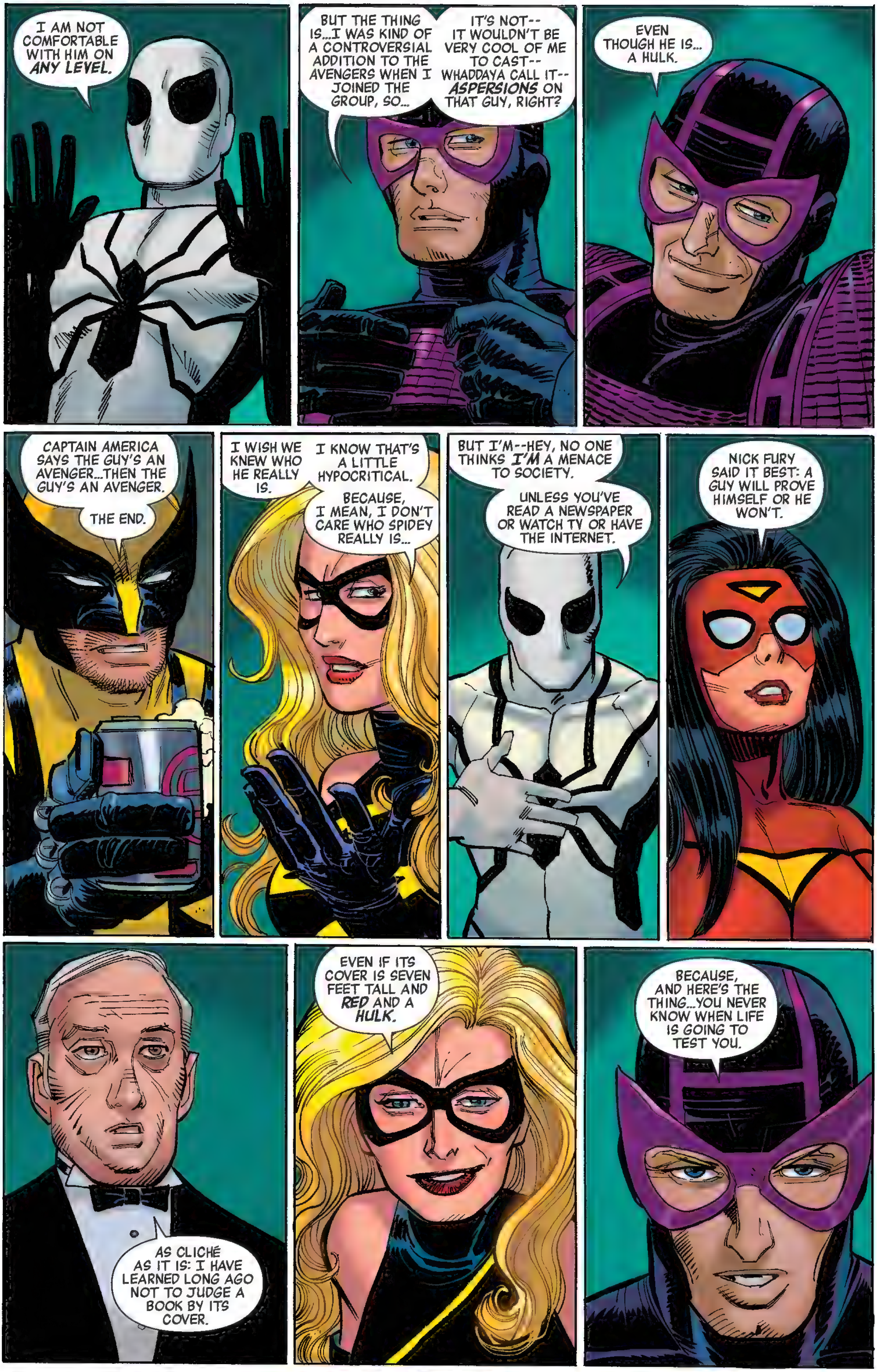

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US ON THIS--
THE FIRST DAY OF WHAT WE HOPE IS THE START OF A BOLD NEW ERA.
WHEN THINGS WERE AT THEIR MOST DIRE, A MADMAN BROUGHT A CITY BUILT FOR *GODS* CRASHING TO EARTH.
AS FAR AS METAPHORS GO, IT'S RIGHT ON THE NOSE.
THERE IS SO MUCH ANXIETY IN THE AIR THESE DAYS-- FEAR, DESOLATION, UNCERTAINTY, DOUBT--
AND HERE IS THIS CASTLE, IN ASHES, STREWN ACROSS OUR HEARTLAND.
THE AVENGERS SAY, *"RISE UP."* THE AVENGERS SAY, *"REBUILD."*
JOIN US AND *REBUILD.*
"I WAS THERE BECAUSE I'M AN AVENGER AND I GO WHERE THE AVENGERS GO.
"I WAS THERE BECAUSE *SOMETHING* NEEDS TO BE DONE AND TONY STARK THINKS THIS IS WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE.
"BUT WHAT I DIDN'T KNOW UNTIL I GOT THERE...

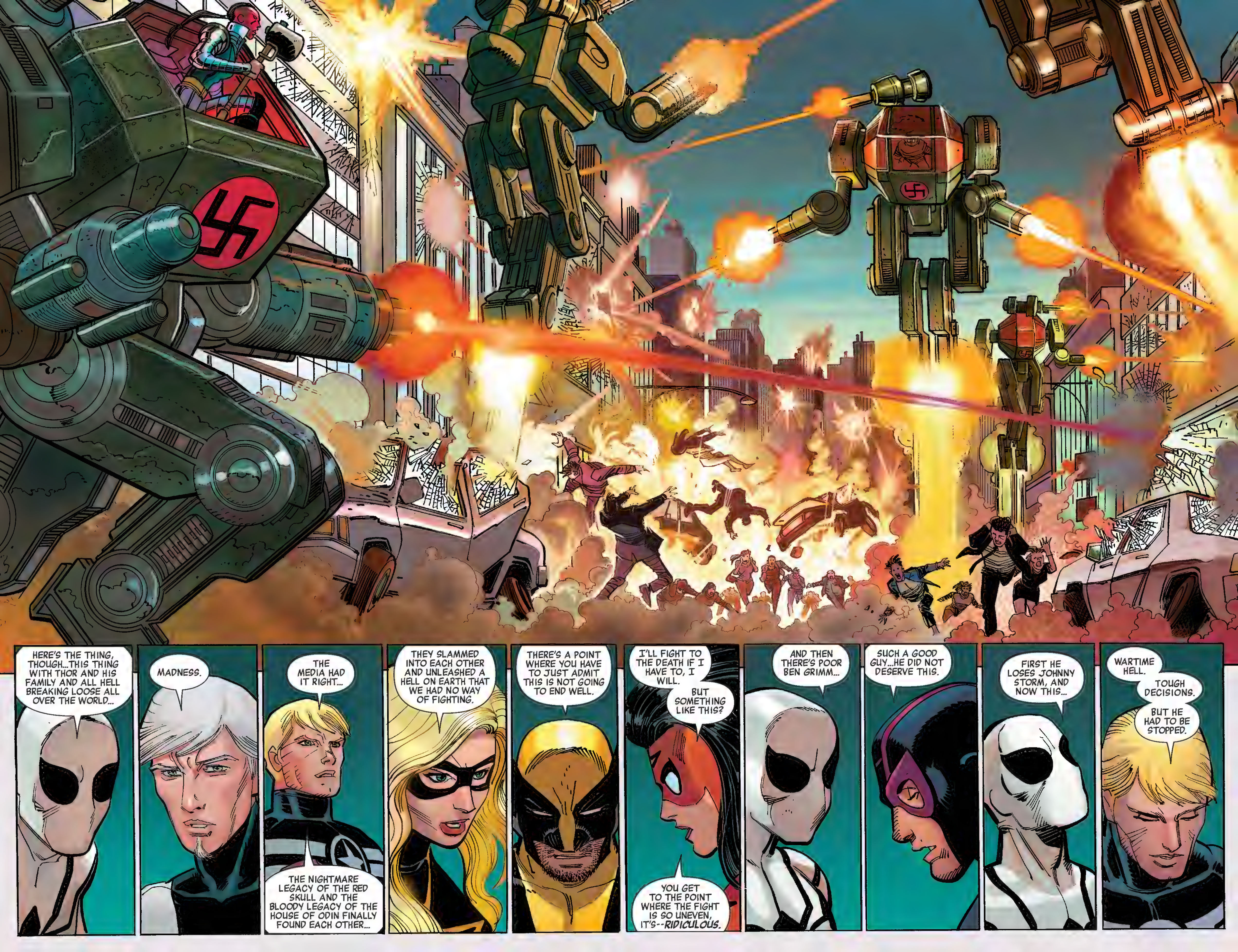

...WAS THAT THOR *NEEDED* THIS.
I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM SO EMOTIONAL. I GUESS THE WORD IS--IS VULNERABLE
HE'S SUCH A ROCK. ALL THE TIME.
SUCH A PILLAR OF AWESOME.
YOU SOMETIMES FORGET THAT HE NEEDS THE SAME THINGS WE NEED.
HE NEEDS TO KNOW HIS FRIENDS WILL BE THERE.
I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT MY MARRIAGE OR LACK THEREOF ANYMORE.
IF YOU WANT TO ASK ME QUESTIONS ABOUT THE AVENGERS... GREAT!
BUT MY PERSONAL LIFE IS MY BUSINESS.
I DON'T THINK MOST PEOPLE CONSIDER HOW MUCH OF A NORMAL LIFE THE AVENGERS SACRIFICE.
IT'S THEIR CHOICE--BUT IT MUST BE RECOGNIZED.
THEY ARE--ALL OF THEM--BEAUTIFUL CREATURES WITH NEEDS AND DESIRES JUST LIKE YOU AND I.
AND THEY PUT ASIDE THOSE NEEDS FOR US.
I DON'T THINK THAT MOST OF THEM EVEN REALIZE HOW MUCH THEY LET GO OF.
WELL, WE HAD OUR SONG AND DANCE, DOG AND PONY SHOW CIRCUS...
FOR ALL THE GOOD IT DID.
IT DIDN'T STOP WHAT WAS COMING NEXT FROM COMING NEXT.
NOTHING WAS GOING TO STOP IT.
AND, LIKE THAT, THE AVENGERS WERE NEVER GOING TO BE THE SAME AGAIN.
NO JOKE.

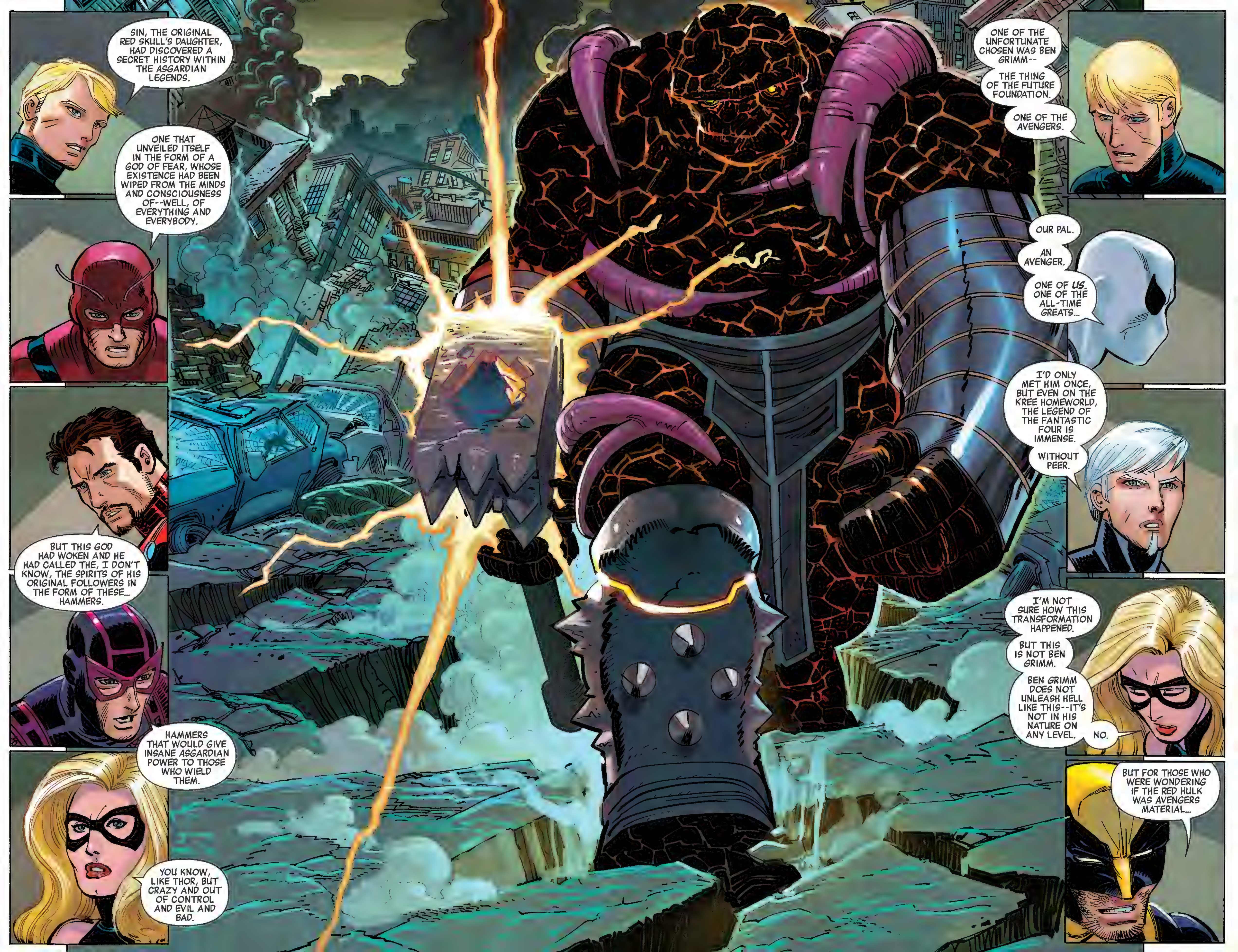


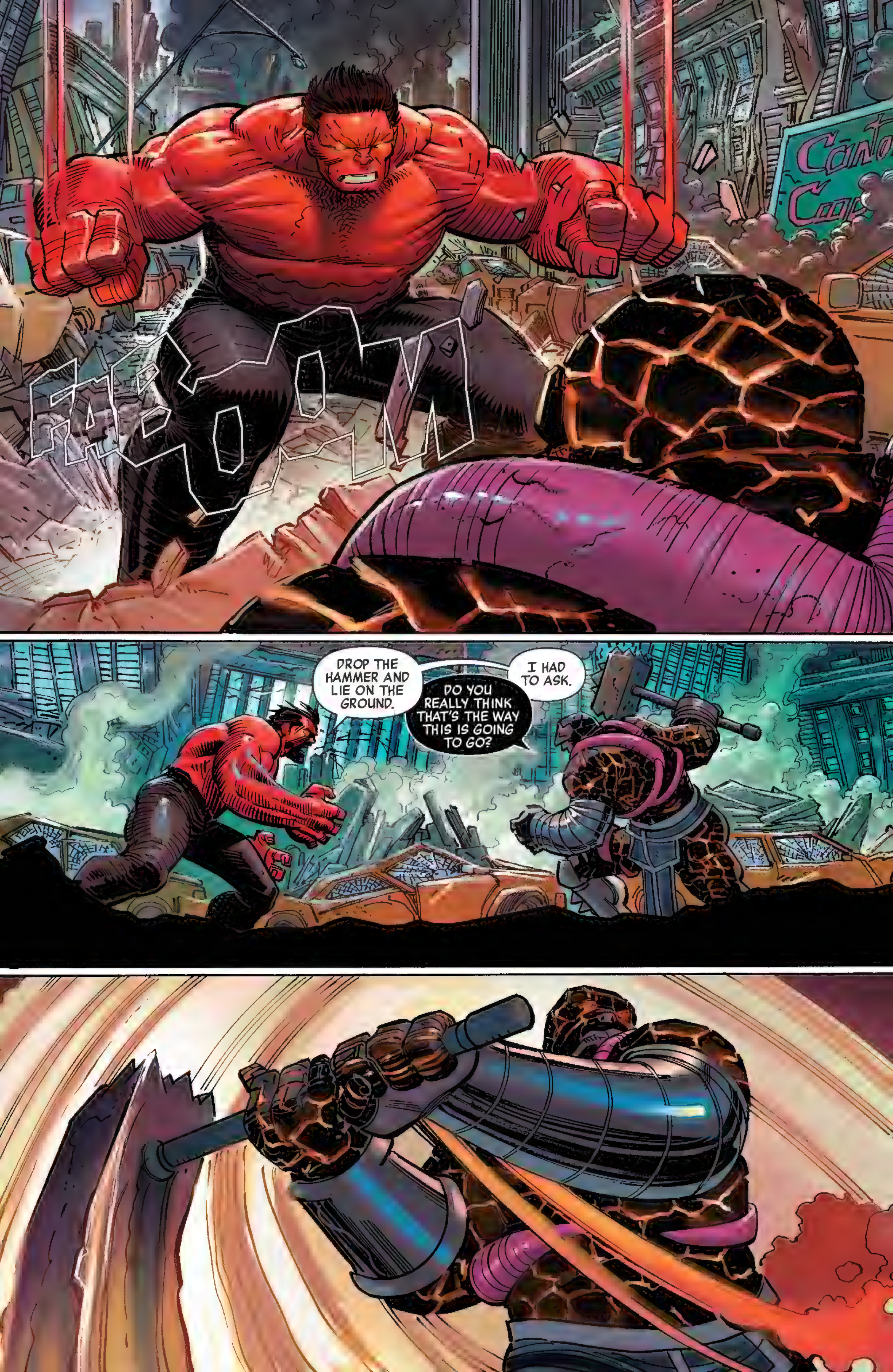
AVENGERS #14

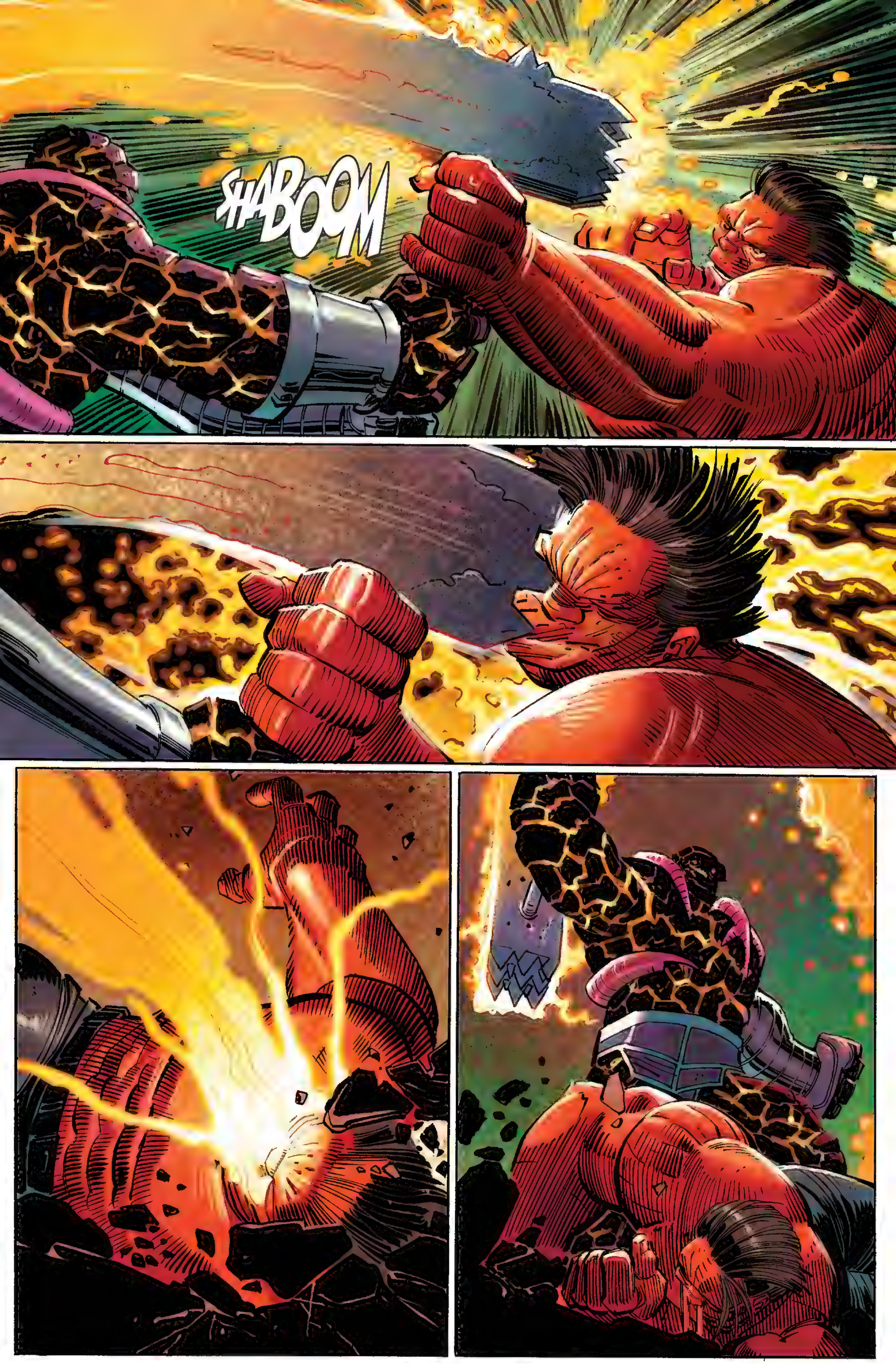

IF I DON'T LIKE SOMETHING I'VE SAID HERE, CAN I HAVE IT TAKEN OUT?
I'M JUST NOT SURE WHAT'S NATIONAL SECURITY AND WHAT'S OKAY TO TALK ABOUT.
WHAT DID YOU ASK?
WHAT'S MY BIGGEST CONCERN ABOUT BEING AN AVENGER?
MINE IS WHETHER WE'RE GOING TO LIVE UP TO PEOPLE'S EXPECTATIONS AND NEEDS.
DYING HORRIBLY WOULD SUCK.
YOU OFTEN FIND YOURSELF PARTNERED WITH PEOPLE YOU DON'T KNOW VERY WELL BUT HAVE TO TRUST WITH YOUR LIFE.
MOST OF THE TIME, IT IS NOT A PROBLEM AT ALL.
ACTUALLY, IT'S QUITE THE OPPOSITE.
YOU FIND YOURSELF TRYING DESPERATELY TO EARN EACH OTHER'S RESPECT.
BUT, YEAH, THERE ARE ALWAYS SOME PEOPLE ON THE TEAM WHO YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW OR UNDERSTAND THAT WELL.
LIKE THIS NOH-VARR, MARVEL BOY, THE PROTECTOR...WHATEVER HE CALLS HIMSELF.
IT'S LIKE TALKING TO A BLANK STARE OF A WALL.
I'M SURE HE'S A NICE GUY IF HE'S ON THE TEAM, BUT...
I DON'T KNOW HOW COMFORTABLE I AM WITH THE RED HULK.

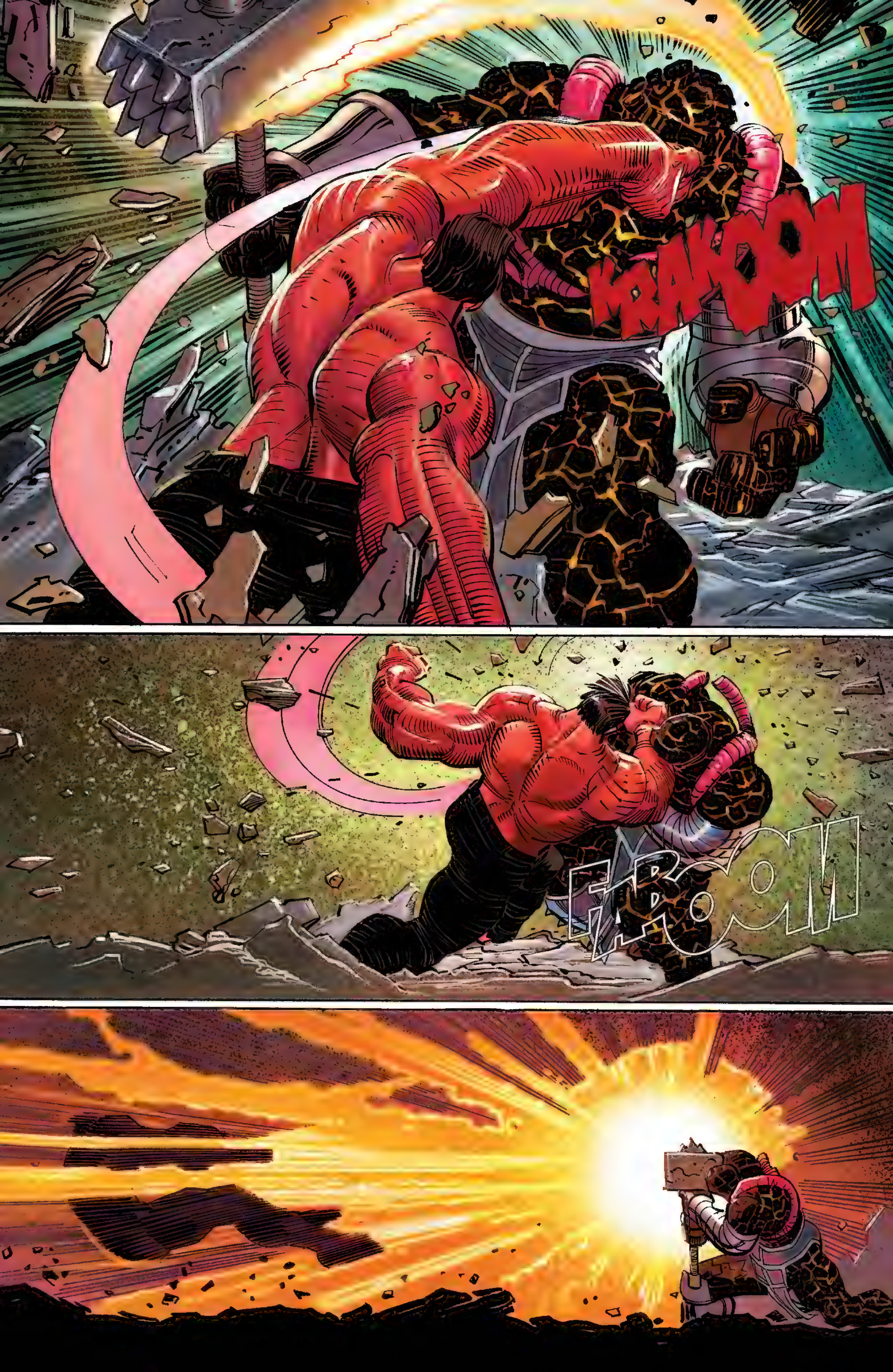

I AM NOT COMFORTABLE WITH HIM ON ***ANY LEVEL.***
BUT THE THING IS...I WAS KIND OF A CONTROVERSIAL ADDITION TO THE AVENGERS WHEN I JOINED THE GROUP, SO...
IT'S NOT-- IT WOULDN'T BE VERY COOL OF ME TO CAST-- WHADDAYA CALL IT-- ***ASPERSIONS*** ON THAT GUY, RIGHT?
EVEN THOUGH HE IS... A HULK.
CAPTAIN AMERICA SAYS THE GUY'S AN AVENGER...THEN THE GUY'S AN AVENGER.
THE END.
I WISH WE KNEW WHO HE REALLY IS.
I KNOW THAT'S A LITTLE HYPOCRITICAL.
BECAUSE, I MEAN, I DON'T CARE WHO SPIDEY REALLY IS...
BUT I'M--HEY, NO ONE THINKS ***I'M*** A MENACE TO SOCIETY.
UNLESS YOU'VE READ A NEWSPAPER OR WATCH TV OR HAVE THE INTERNET.
NICK FURY SAID IT BEST: A GUY WILL PROVE HIMSELF OR HE WON'T.
AS CLICHÉ AS IT IS: I HAVE LEARNED LONG AGO NOT TO JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER.
EVEN IF ITS COVER IS SEVEN FEET TALL AND ***RED*** AND A ***HULK.***
BECAUSE, AND HERE'S THE THING...YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN LIFE IS GOING TO TEST YOU.

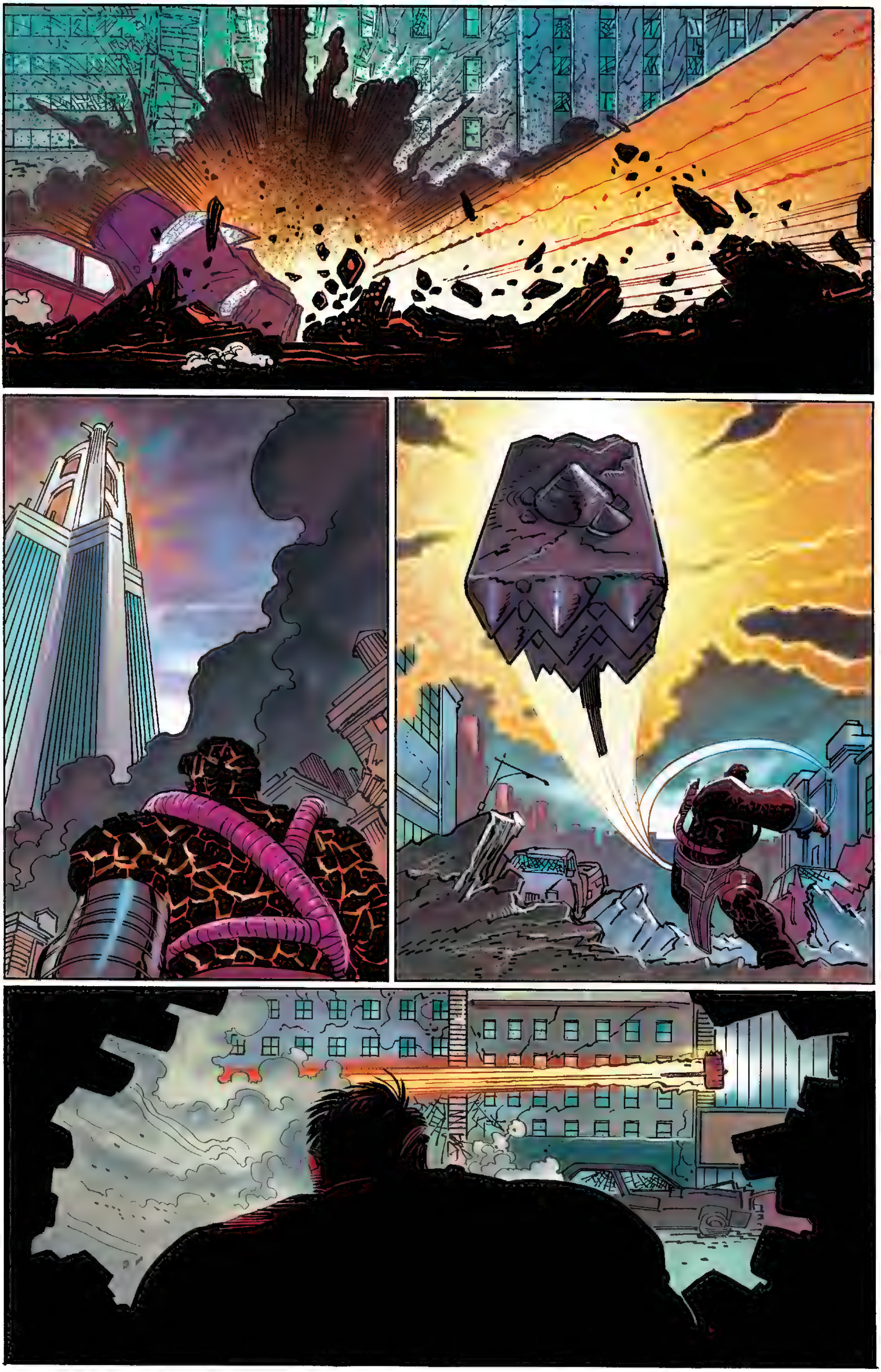

HERE'S THE THING, THOUGH...THIS THING WITH THOR AND HIS FAMILY AND ALL HELL BREAKING LOOSE ALL OVER THE WORLD...
MADNESS.
THE MEDIA HAD IT RIGHT...
THE NIGHTMARE LEGACY OF THE RED SKULL AND THE BLOODY LEGACY OF THE HOUSE OF ODIN FINALLY FOUND EACH OTHER...
THEY SLAMMED INTO EACH OTHER AND UNLEASHED A HELL ON EARTH THAT WE HAD NO WAY OF FIGHTING.
THERE'S A POINT WHERE YOU HAVE TO JUST ADMIT THIS IS NOT GOING TO END WELL.
I'LL FIGHT TO THE DEATH IF I HAVE TO, I WILL.
BUT SOMETHING LIKE THIS?
YOU GET TO THE POINT WHERE THE FIGHT IS SO UNEVEN, IT'S--*RIDICULOUS.*
AND THEN THERE'S POOR BEN GRIMM...
SUCH A GOOD GUY...HE DID NOT DESERVE THIS.
FIRST HE LOSES JOHNNY STORM, AND NOW THIS...
WARTIME HELL.
TOUGH DECISIONS.
BUT HE HAD TO BE STOPPED.

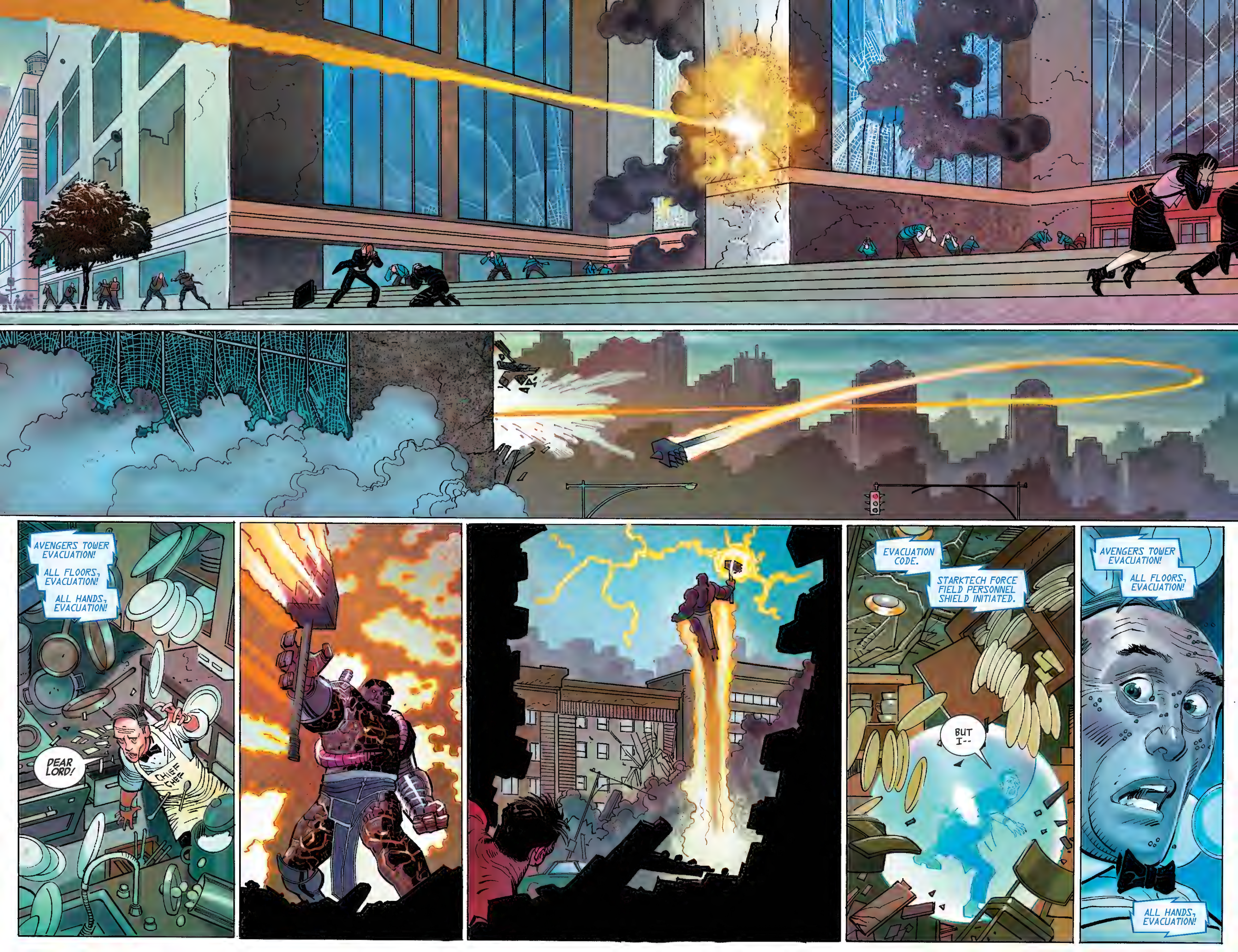

SIN, THE ORIGINAL RED SKULL'S DAUGHTER, HAD DISCOVERED A SECRET HISTORY WITHIN THE ASGARDIAN LEGENDS.
ONE THAT UNVEILED ITSELF IN THE FORM OF A GOD OF FEAR, WHOSE EXISTENCE HAD BEEN WIPED FROM THE MINDS AND CONSCIOUSNESS OF--WELL, OF EVERYTHING AND EVERYBODY.
BUT THIS GOD HAD WOKEN AND HE HAD CALLED THE, I DON'T KNOW, THE SPIRITS OF HIS ORIGINAL FOLLOWERS IN THE FORM OF THESE... HAMMERS.
HAMMERS THAT WOULD GIVE INSANE ASGARDIAN POWER TO THOSE WHO WIELD THEM.
YOU KNOW, LIKE THOR, BUT CRAZY AND OUT OF CONTROL AND EVIL AND BAD.
ONE OF THE UNFORTUNATE CHOSEN WAS BEN GRIMM--
THE THING OF THE FUTURE FOUNDATION.
ONE OF THE AVENGERS.
OUR PAL.
AN AVENGER.
ONE OF US. ONE OF THE ALL-TIME GREATS...
I'D ONLY MET HIM ONCE, BUT EVEN ON THE KREE HOMEWORLD, THE LEGEND OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR IS IMMENSE.
WITHOUT PEER.
I'M NOT SURE HOW THIS TRANSFORMATION HAPPENED.
BUT THIS IS NOT BEN GRIMM.
BEN GRIMM DOES NOT UNLEASH HELL LIKE THIS--IT'S NOT IN HIS NATURE ON ANY LEVEL.
NO.
BUT FOR THOSE WHO WERE WONDERING IF THE RED HULK WAS AVENGERS MATERIAL...

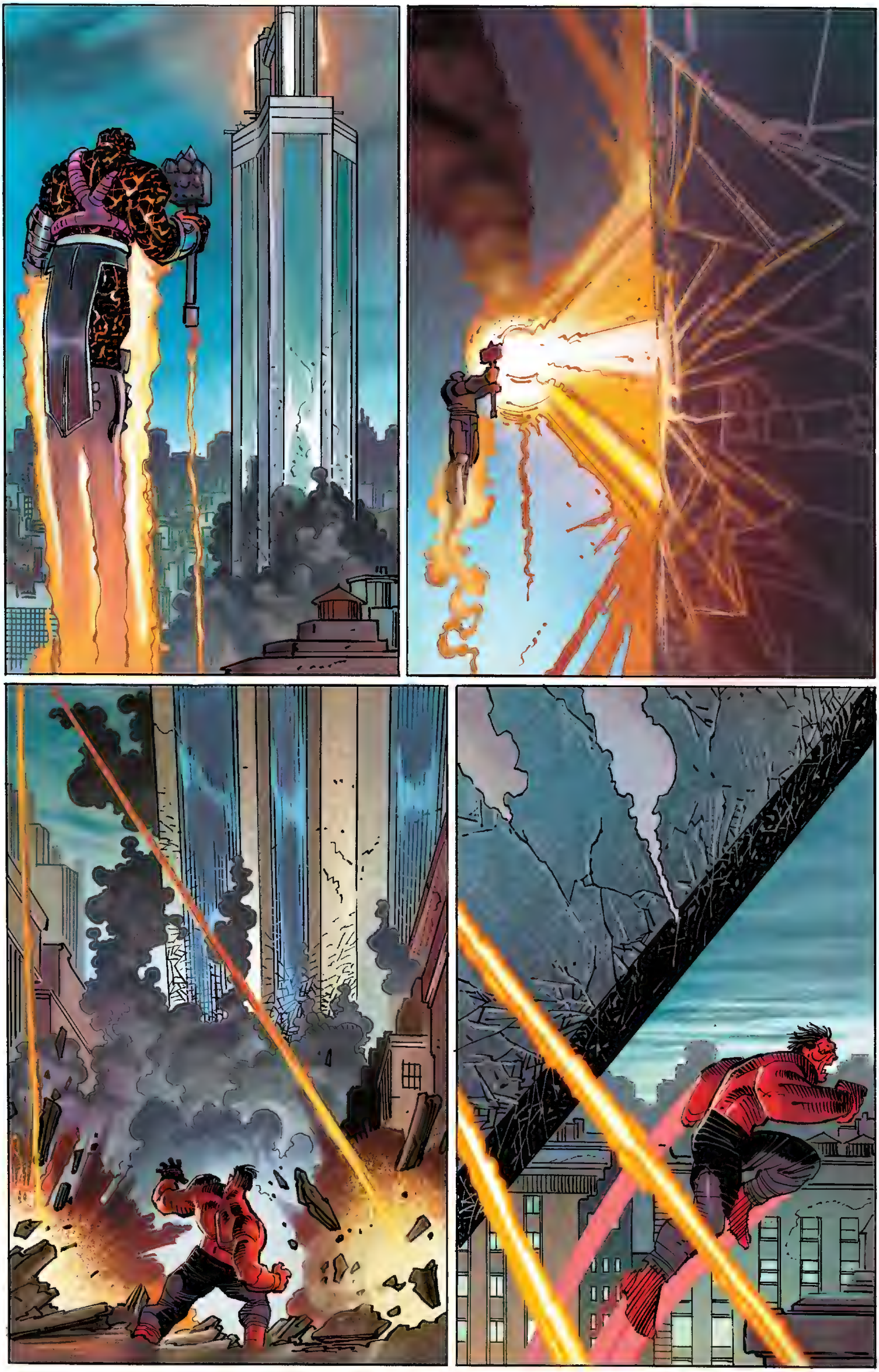

FRAKOOOM
DROP THE HAMMER AND LIE ON THE GROUND.
I HAD TO ASK.
DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT'S THE WAY THIS IS GOING TO GO?

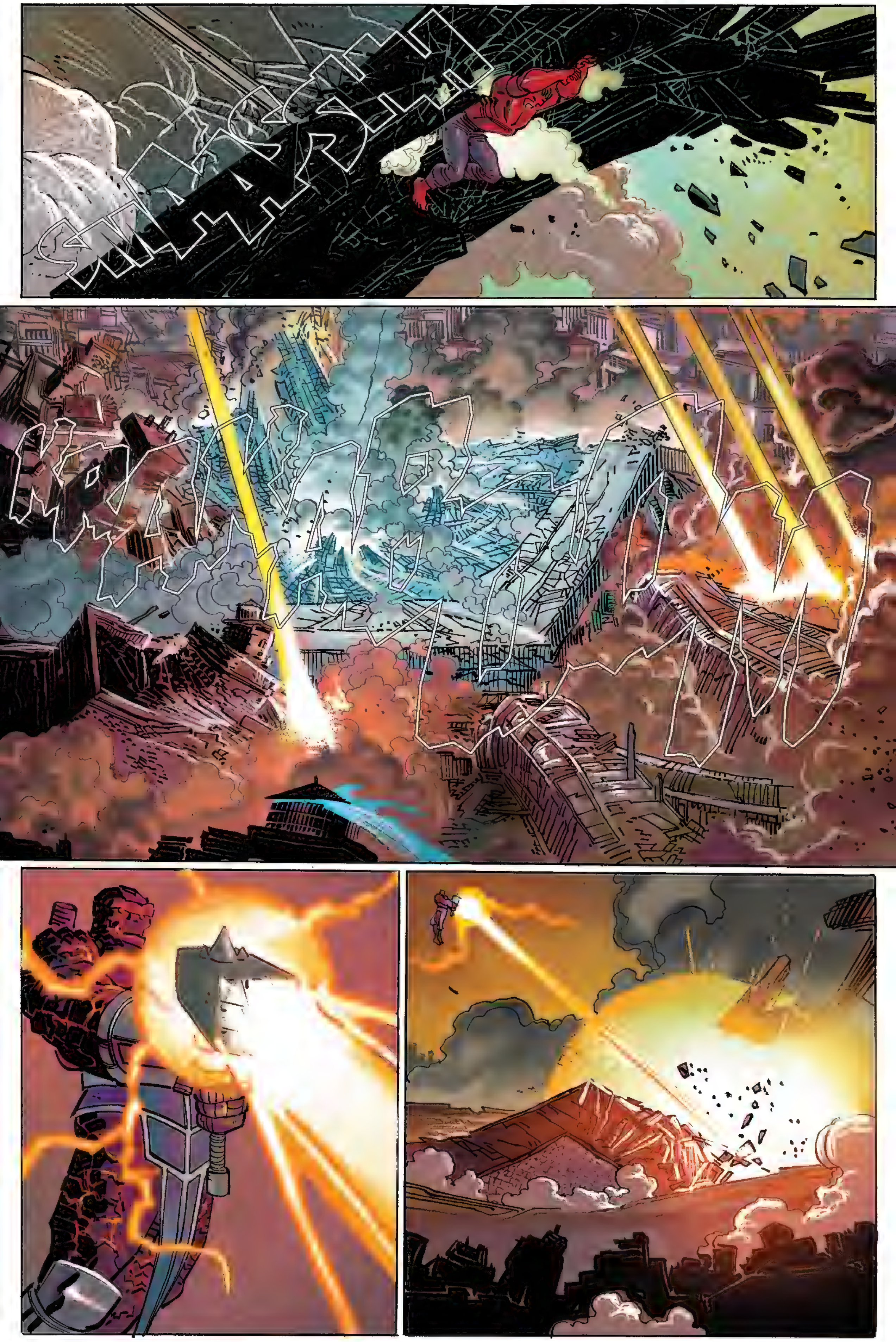

SHABOOM

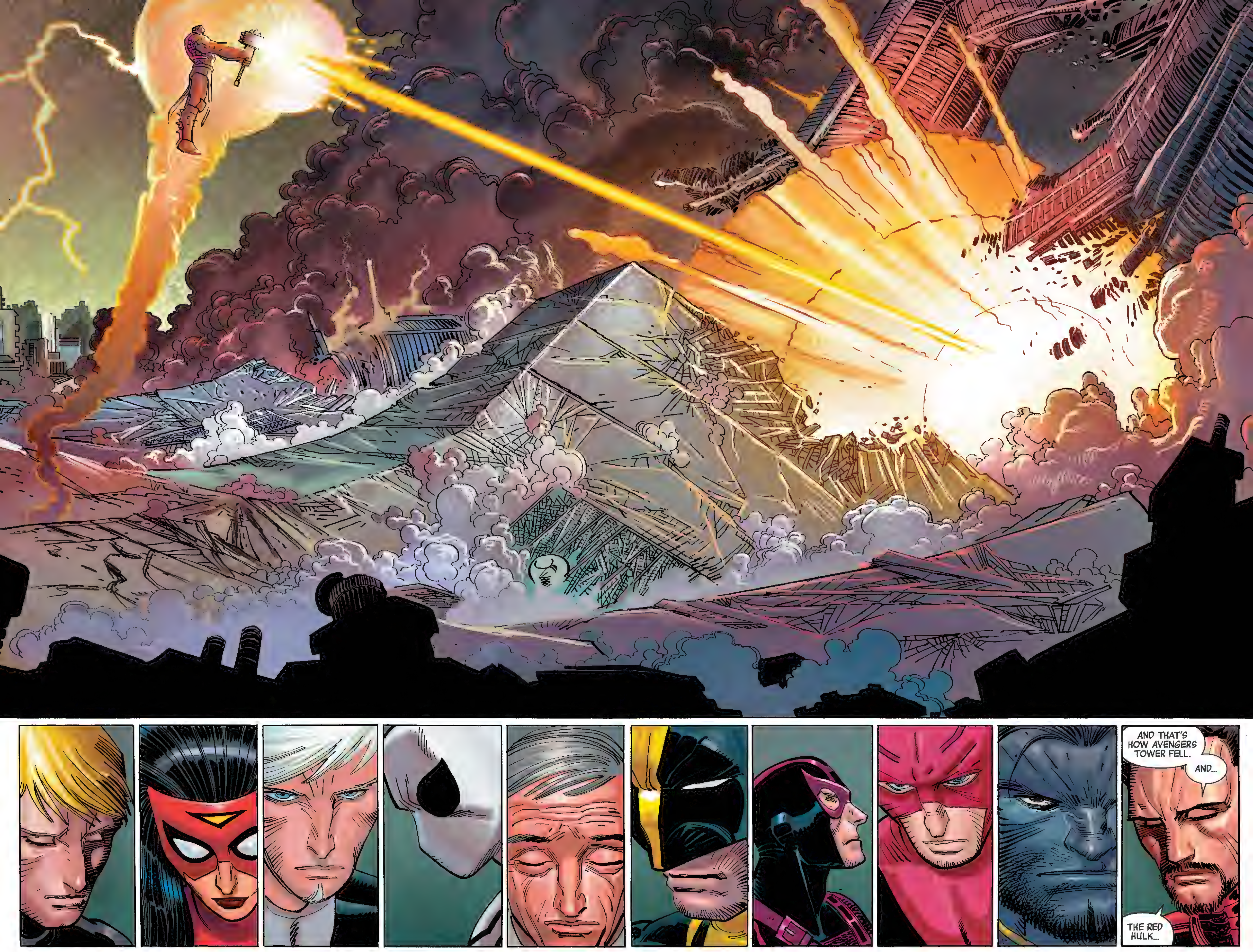

KRAKOOM
FZBOOM

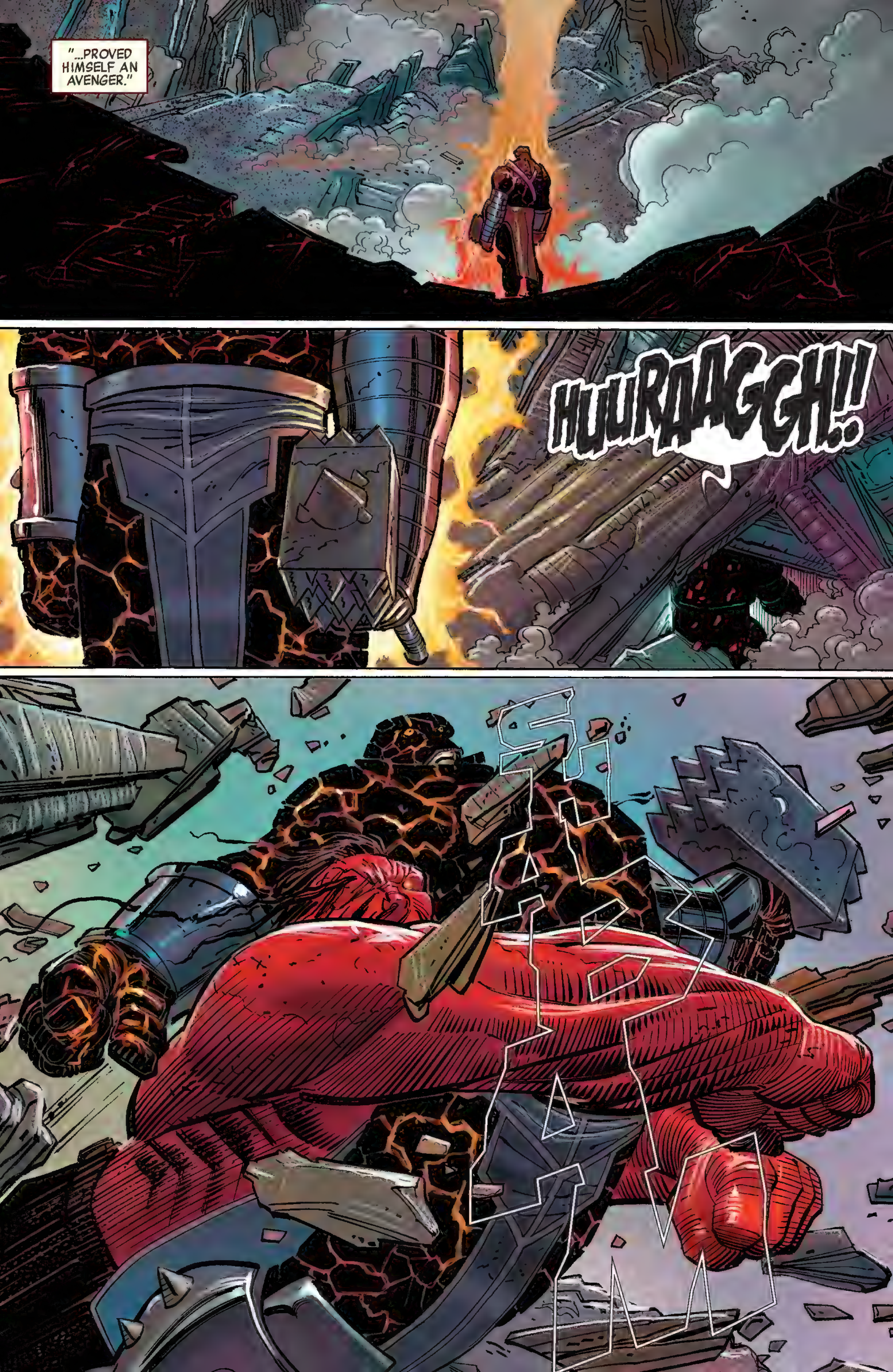


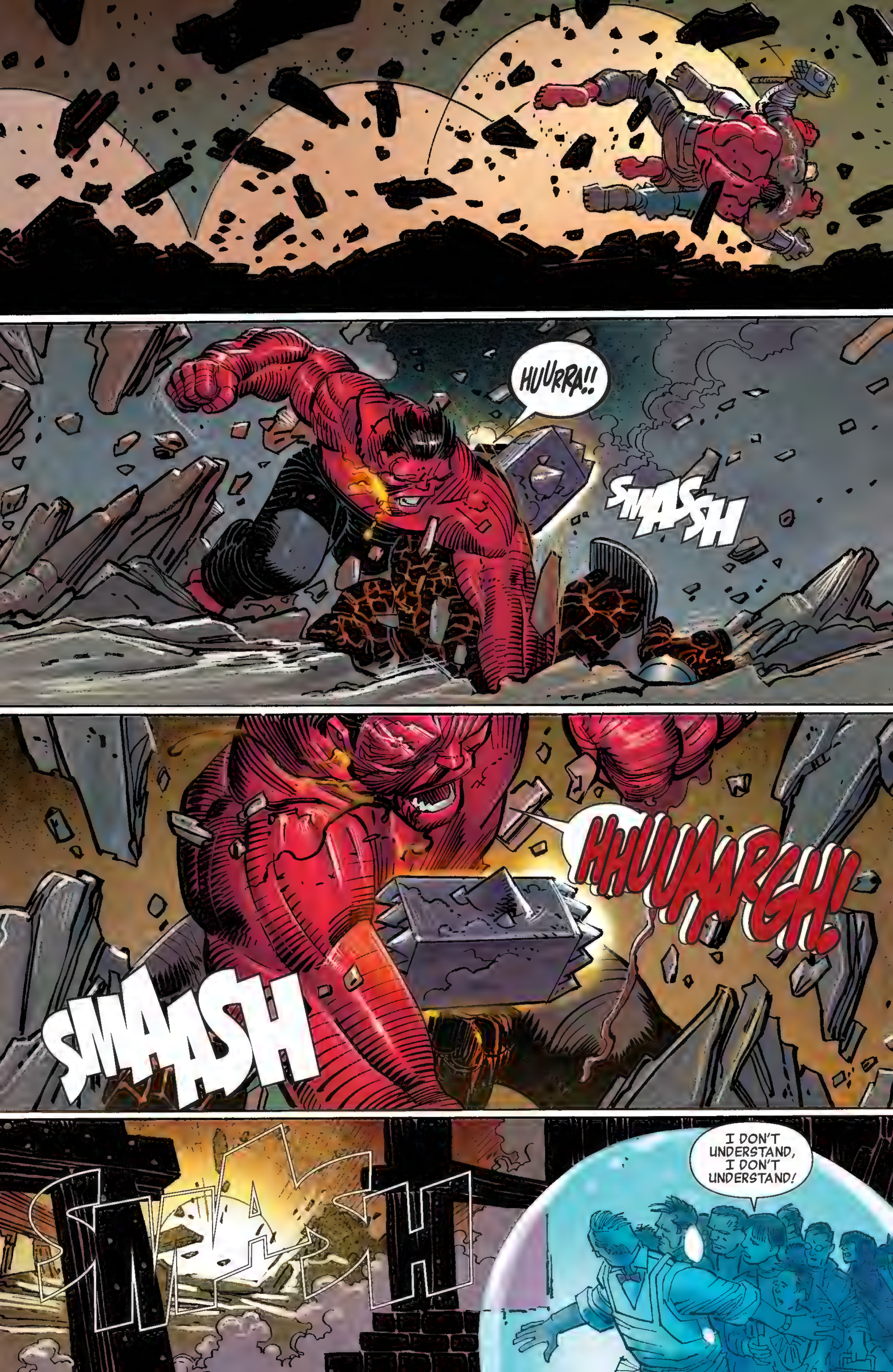

AVENGERS TOWER EVACUATION!
ALL FLOORS, EVACUATION!
ALL HANDS, EVACUATION!
DEAR LORD!
CHIEF CHEF
EVACUATION CODE.
STARKTECH FORCE FIELD PERSONNEL SHIELD INITIATED.
BUT I--
AVENGERS TOWER EVACUATION!
ALL FLOORS, EVACUATION!
ALL HANDS, EVACUATION!

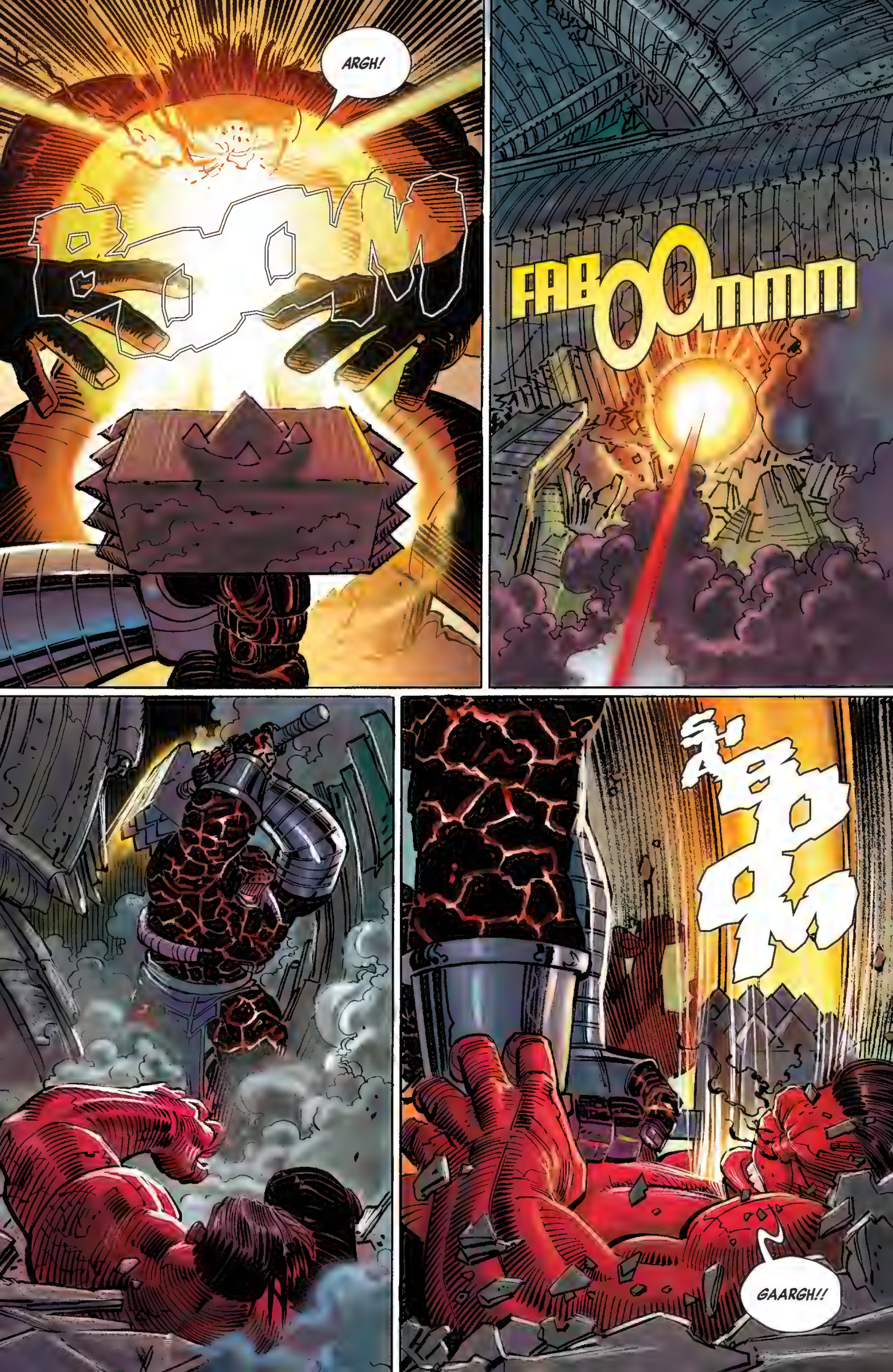


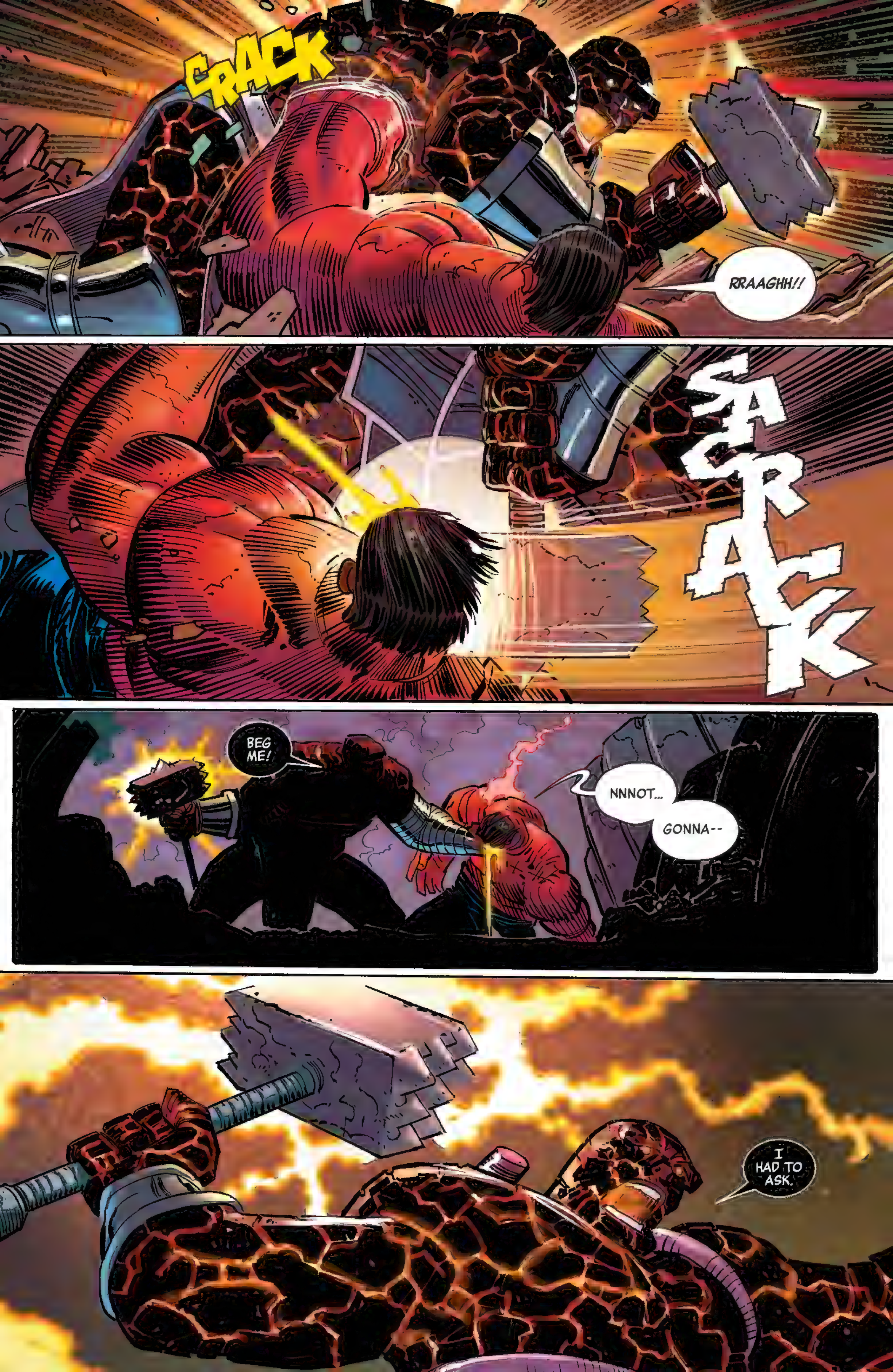

SMASH
KRAKABOOOM

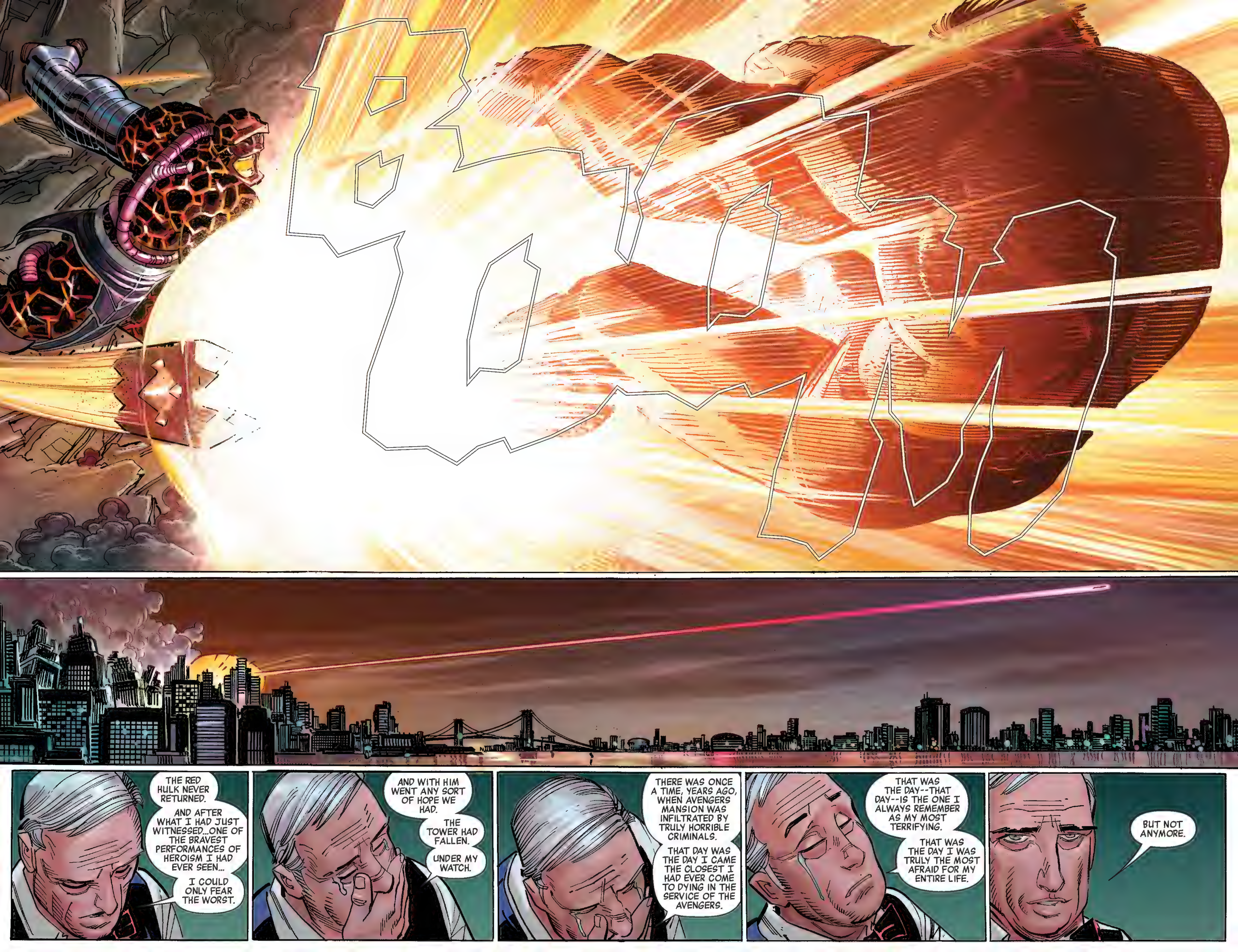

AND THAT'S HOW AVENGERS TOWER FELL.
AND...
THE RED HULK...


"...PROVED HIMSELF AN AVENGER."
HUURAAGGH!!

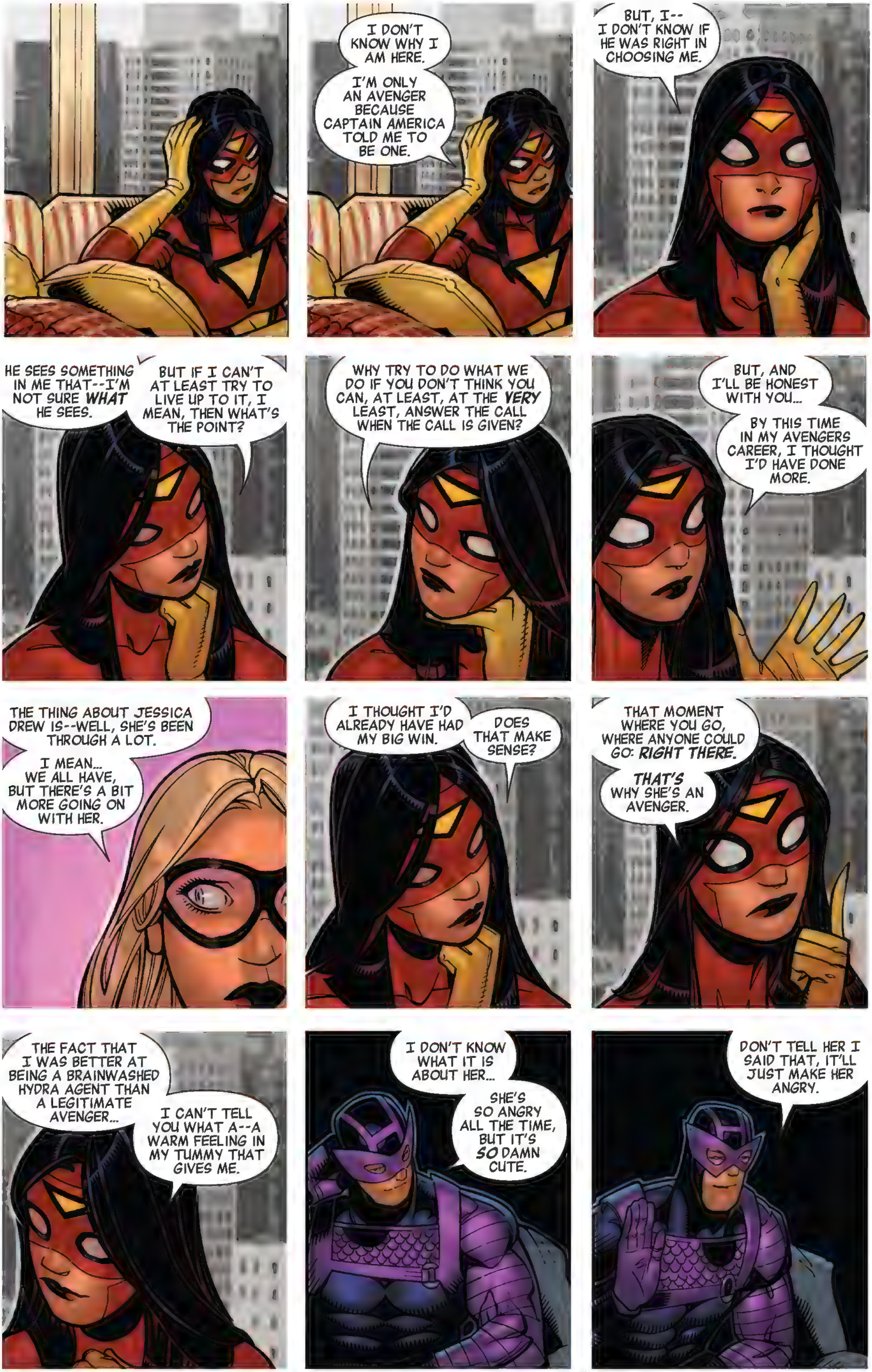

HUURRA!!
SMASH
HHUUAARGH!
SMAAASH
SMASH
I DON'T UNDERSTAND, I DON'T UNDERSTAND!

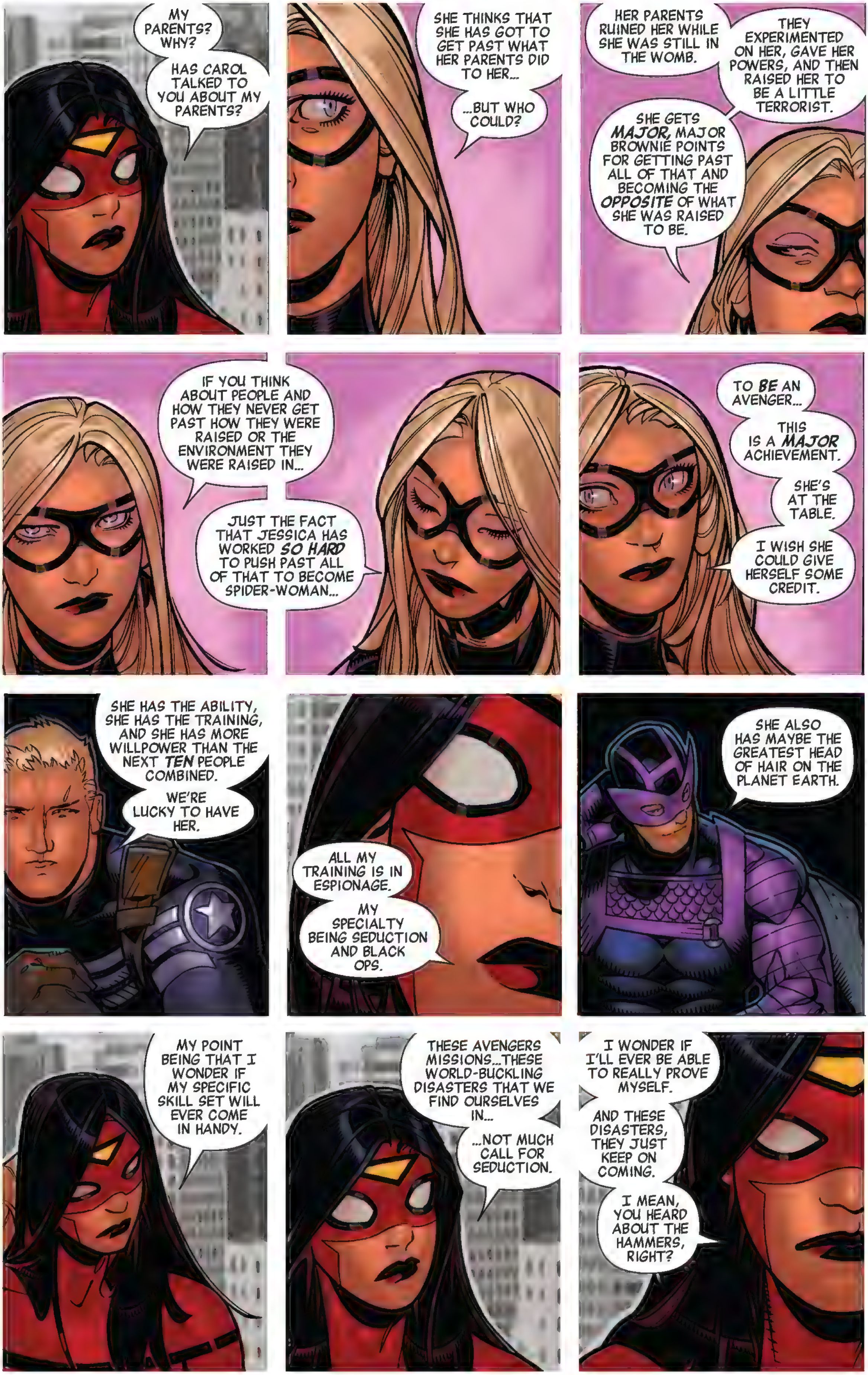

ARGH!
BOOM
FABOOOmmm
GAARGH!!

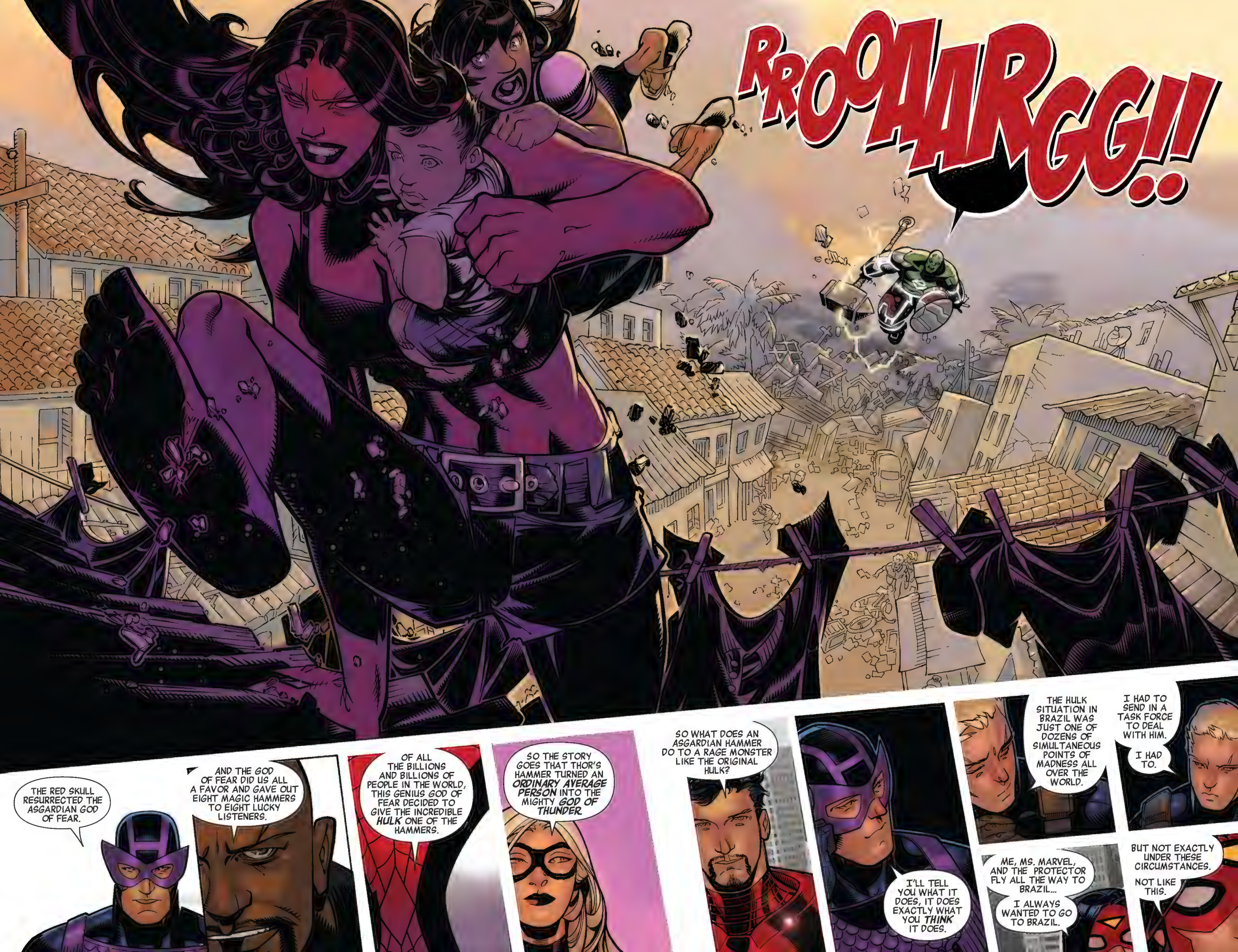

CRACK
RRAAGHH!!
SACRACK
BEG ME!
NNNOT...
GONNA--
I HAD TO ASK.

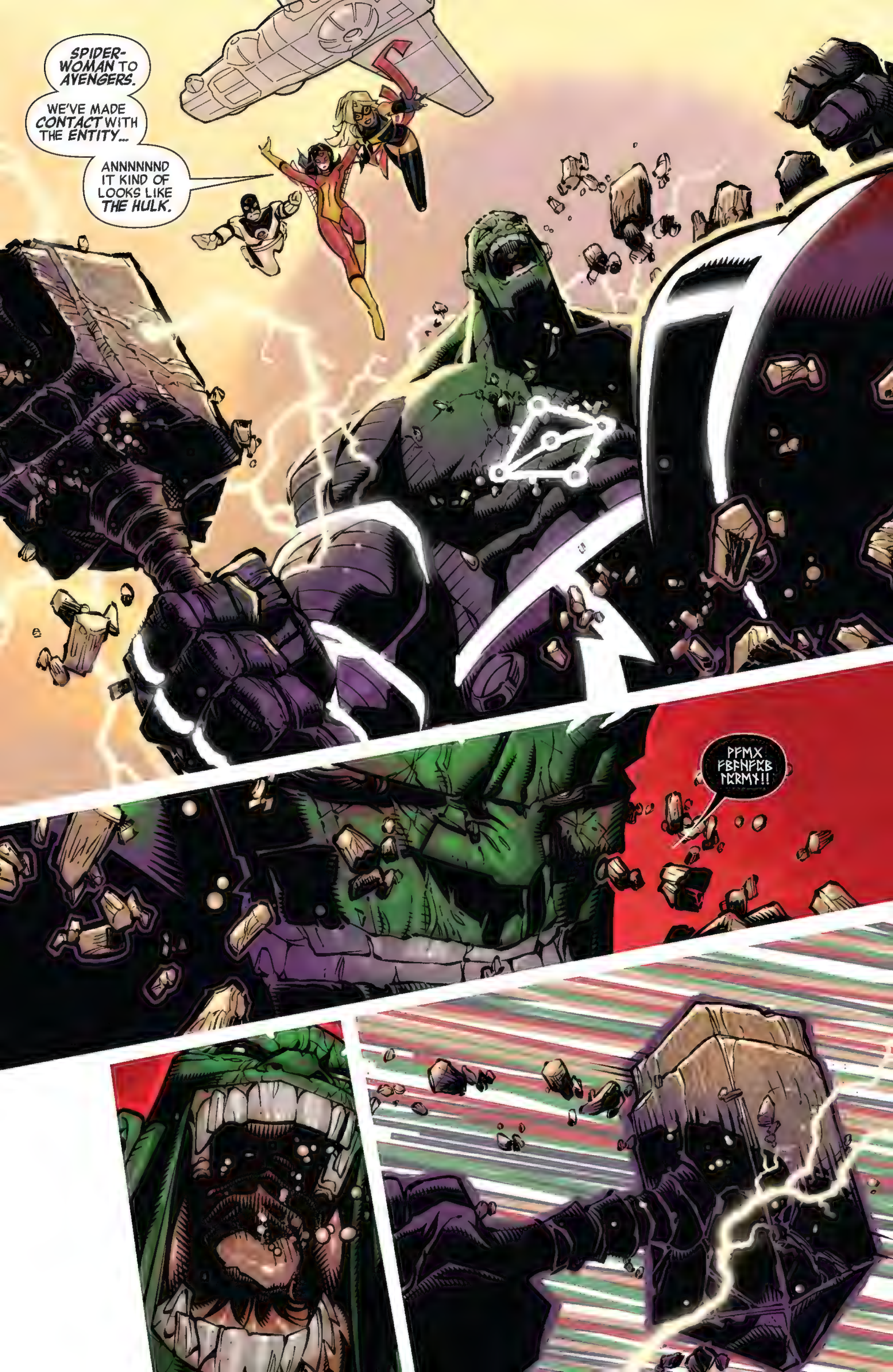

BOOM
THE RED HULK NEVER RETURNED.
AND AFTER WHAT I HAD JUST WITNESSED...ONE OF THE BRAVEST PERFORMANCES OF HEROISM I HAD EVER SEEN...
I COULD ONLY FEAR THE WORST.
AND WITH HIM WENT ANY SORT OF HOPE WE HAD.
THE TOWER HAD FALLEN.
UNDER MY WATCH.
THERE WAS ONCE A TIME, YEARS AGO, WHEN AVENGERS MANSION WAS INFILTRATED BY TRULY HORRIBLE CRIMINALS.
THAT DAY WAS THE DAY I CAME THE CLOSEST I HAD EVER COME TO DYING IN THE SERVICE OF THE AVENGERS.
THAT WAS THE DAY--THAT DAY--IS THE ONE I ALWAYS REMEMBER AS MY MOST TERRIFYING.
THAT WAS THE DAY I WAS TRULY THE MOST AFRAID FOR MY ENTIRE LIFE.
BUT NOT ANYMORE.

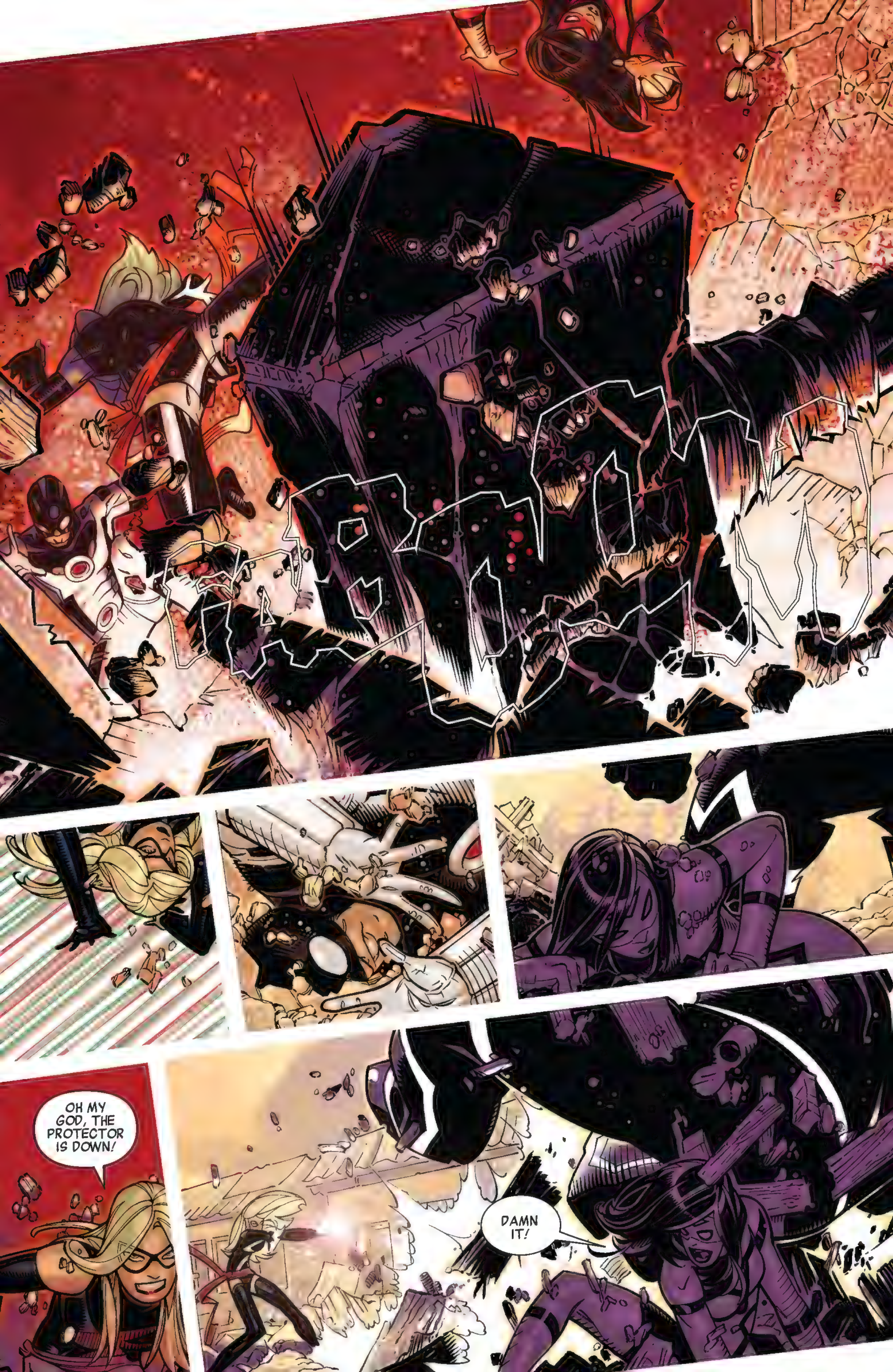
AVENGERS #15

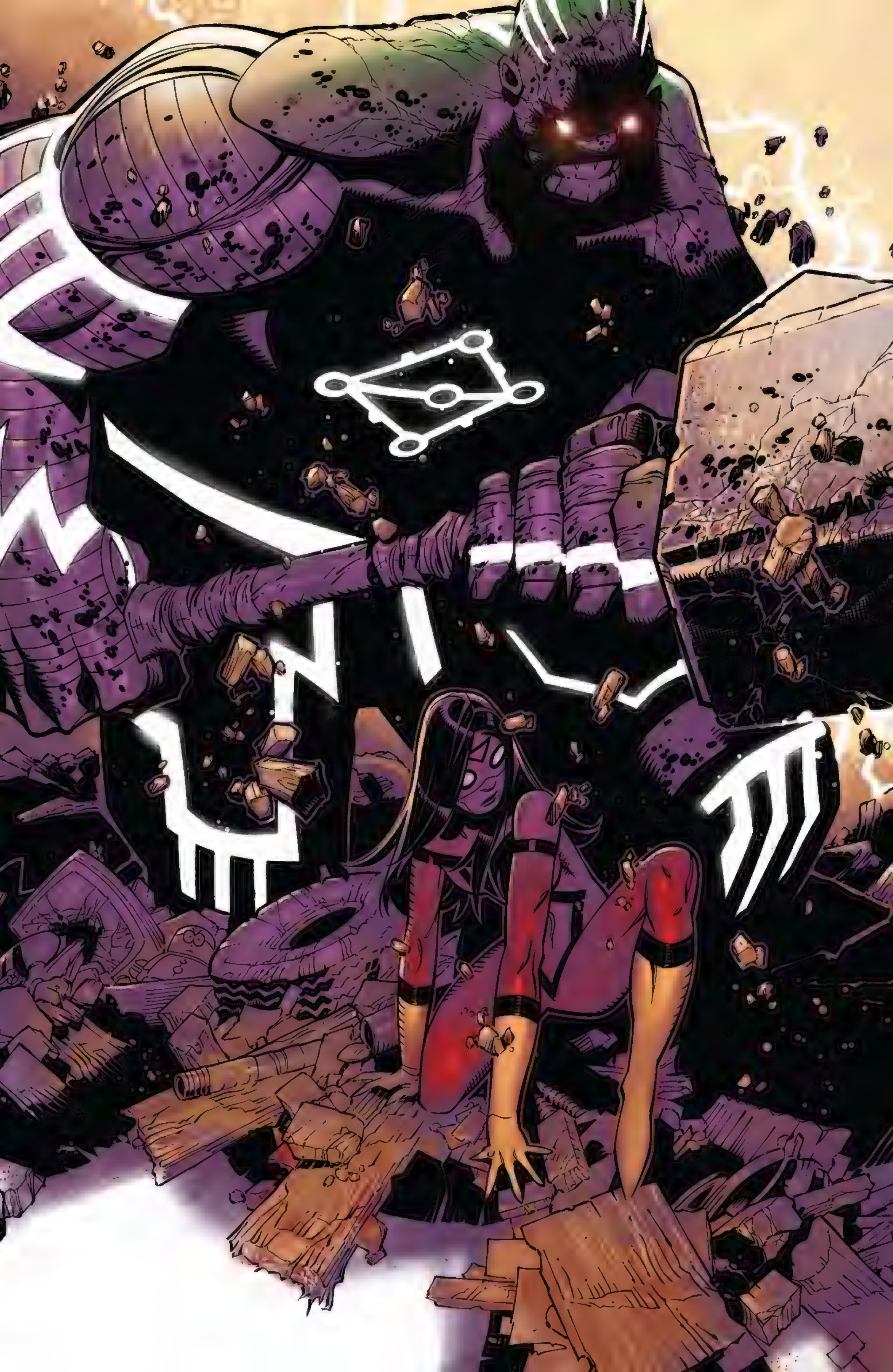

I DON'T KNOW WHY I AM HERE.
I'M ONLY AN AVENGER BECAUSE CAPTAIN AMERICA TOLD ME TO BE ONE.
BUT, I-- I DON'T KNOW IF HE WAS RIGHT IN CHOOSING ME.
HE SEES SOMETHING IN ME THAT--I'M NOT SURE WHAT HE SEES.
BUT IF I CAN'T AT LEAST TRY TO LIVE UP TO IT, I MEAN, THEN WHAT'S THE POINT?
WHY TRY TO DO WHAT WE DO IF YOU DON'T THINK YOU CAN, AT LEAST, AT THE VERY LEAST, ANSWER THE CALL WHEN THE CALL IS GIVEN?
BUT, AND I'LL BE HONEST WITH YOU...
BY THIS TIME IN MY AVENGERS CAREER, I THOUGHT I'D HAVE DONE MORE.
THE THING ABOUT JESSICA DREW IS--WELL, SHE'S BEEN THROUGH A LOT.
I MEAN... WE ALL HAVE, BUT THERE'S A BIT MORE GOING ON WITH HER.
I THOUGHT I'D ALREADY HAVE HAD MY BIG WIN.
DOES THAT MAKE SENSE?
THAT MOMENT WHERE YOU GO, WHERE ANYONE COULD GO: RIGHT THERE.
THAT'S WHY SHE'S AN AVENGER.
THE FACT THAT I WAS BETTER AT BEING A BRAINWASHED HYDRA AGENT THAN A LEGITIMATE AVENGER...
I CAN'T TELL YOU WHAT A--A WARM FEELING IN MY TUMMY THAT GIVES ME.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS ABOUT HER...
SHE'S SO ANGRY ALL THE TIME, BUT IT'S SO DAMN CUTE.
DON'T TELL HER I SAID THAT, IT'LL JUST MAKE HER ANGRY.

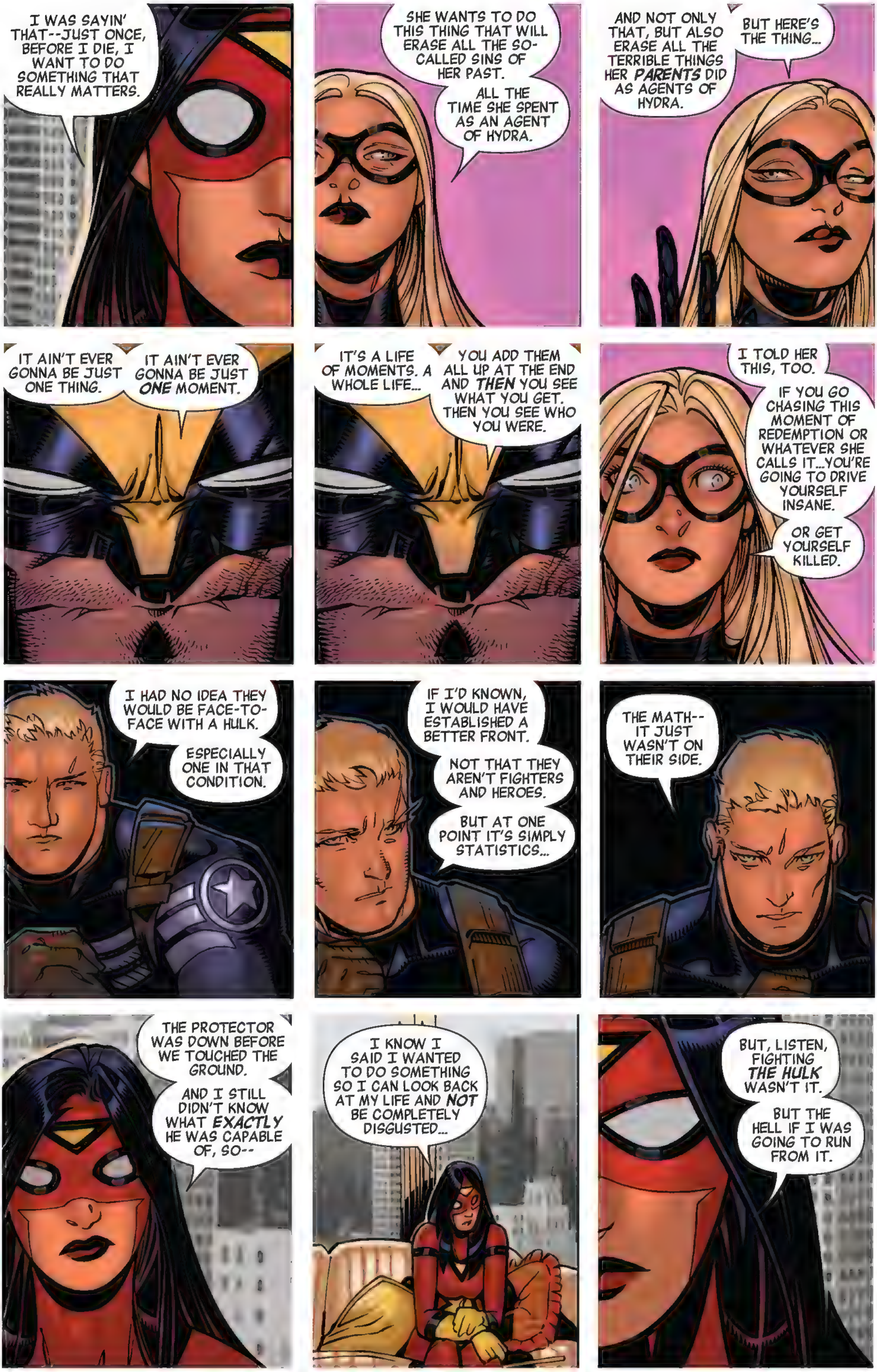

MY PARENTS? WHY?
HAS CAROL TALKED TO YOU ABOUT MY PARENTS?
SHE THINKS THAT SHE HAS GOT TO GET PAST WHAT HER PARENTS DID TO HER...
...BUT WHO COULD?
HER PARENTS RUINED HER WHILE SHE WAS STILL IN THE WOMB.
THEY EXPERIMENTED ON HER, GAVE HER POWERS, AND THEN RAISED HER TO BE A LITTLE TERRORIST.
SHE GETS *MAJOR,* MAJOR BROWNIE POINTS FOR GETTING PAST ALL OF THAT AND BECOMING THE *OPPOSITE* OF WHAT SHE WAS RAISED TO BE.
IF YOU THINK ABOUT PEOPLE AND HOW THEY NEVER GET PAST HOW THEY WERE RAISED OR THE ENVIRONMENT THEY WERE RAISED IN...
JUST THE FACT THAT JESSICA HAS WORKED *SO HARD* TO PUSH PAST ALL OF THAT TO BECOME SPIDER-WOMAN...
TO *BE* AN AVENGER...
THIS IS A *MAJOR* ACHIEVEMENT.
SHE'S AT THE TABLE.
I WISH SHE COULD GIVE HERSELF SOME CREDIT.
SHE HAS THE ABILITY, SHE HAS THE TRAINING, AND SHE HAS MORE WILLPOWER THAN THE NEXT *TEN* PEOPLE COMBINED.
WE'RE LUCKY TO HAVE HER.
ALL MY TRAINING IS IN ESPIONAGE.
MY SPECIALTY BEING SEDUCTION AND BLACK OPS.
SHE ALSO HAS MAYBE THE GREATEST HEAD OF HAIR ON THE PLANET EARTH.
MY POINT BEING THAT I WONDER IF MY SPECIFIC SKILL SET WILL EVER COME IN HANDY.
THESE AVENGERS MISSIONS...THESE WORLD-BUCKLING DISASTERS THAT WE FIND OURSELVES IN...
...NOT MUCH CALL FOR SEDUCTION.
I WONDER IF I'LL EVER BE ABLE TO REALLY PROVE MYSELF.
AND THESE DISASTERS, THEY JUST KEEP ON COMING.
I MEAN, YOU HEARD ABOUT THE HAMMERS, RIGHT?

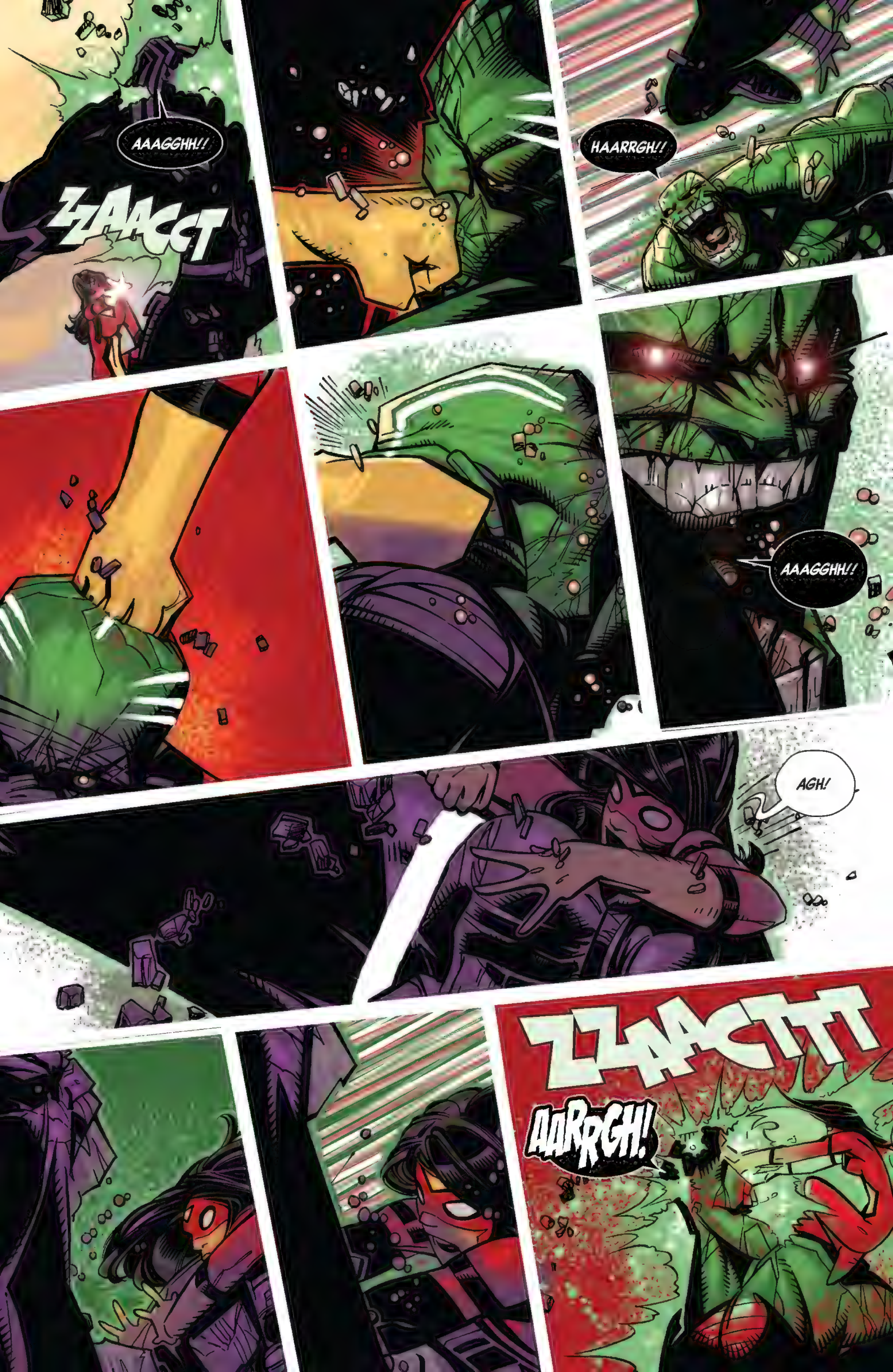

RROOAARGG!!
THE RED SKULL RESURRECTED THE ASGARDIAN GOD OF FEAR.
AND THE GOD OF FEAR DID US ALL A FAVOR AND GAVE OUT EIGHT MAGIC HAMMERS TO EIGHT LUCKY LISTENERS.
OF ALL THE BILLIONS AND BILLIONS OF PEOPLE IN THE WORLD, THIS GENIUS GOD OF FEAR DECIDED TO GIVE THE INCREDIBLE ***HULK*** ONE OF THE HAMMERS.
SO THE STORY GOES THAT THOR'S HAMMER TURNED AN ***ORDINARY AVERAGE PERSON*** INTO THE MIGHTY ***GOD OF THUNDER***.
SO WHAT DOES AN ASGARDIAN HAMMER DO TO A RAGE MONSTER LIKE THE ORIGINAL HULK?
I'LL TELL YOU WHAT IT DOES, IT DOES EXACTLY WHAT YOU ***THINK*** IT DOES.
THE HULK SITUATION IN BRAZIL WAS JUST ONE OF DOZENS OF SIMULTANEOUS POINTS OF MADNESS ALL OVER THE WORLD.
I HAD TO SEND IN A TASK FORCE TO DEAL WITH HIM.
I HAD TO.
ME, MS. MARVEL, AND THE PROTECTOR FLY ALL THE WAY TO BRAZIL...
I ALWAYS WANTED TO GO TO BRAZIL.
BUT NOT EXACTLY UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES.
NOT LIKE THIS.

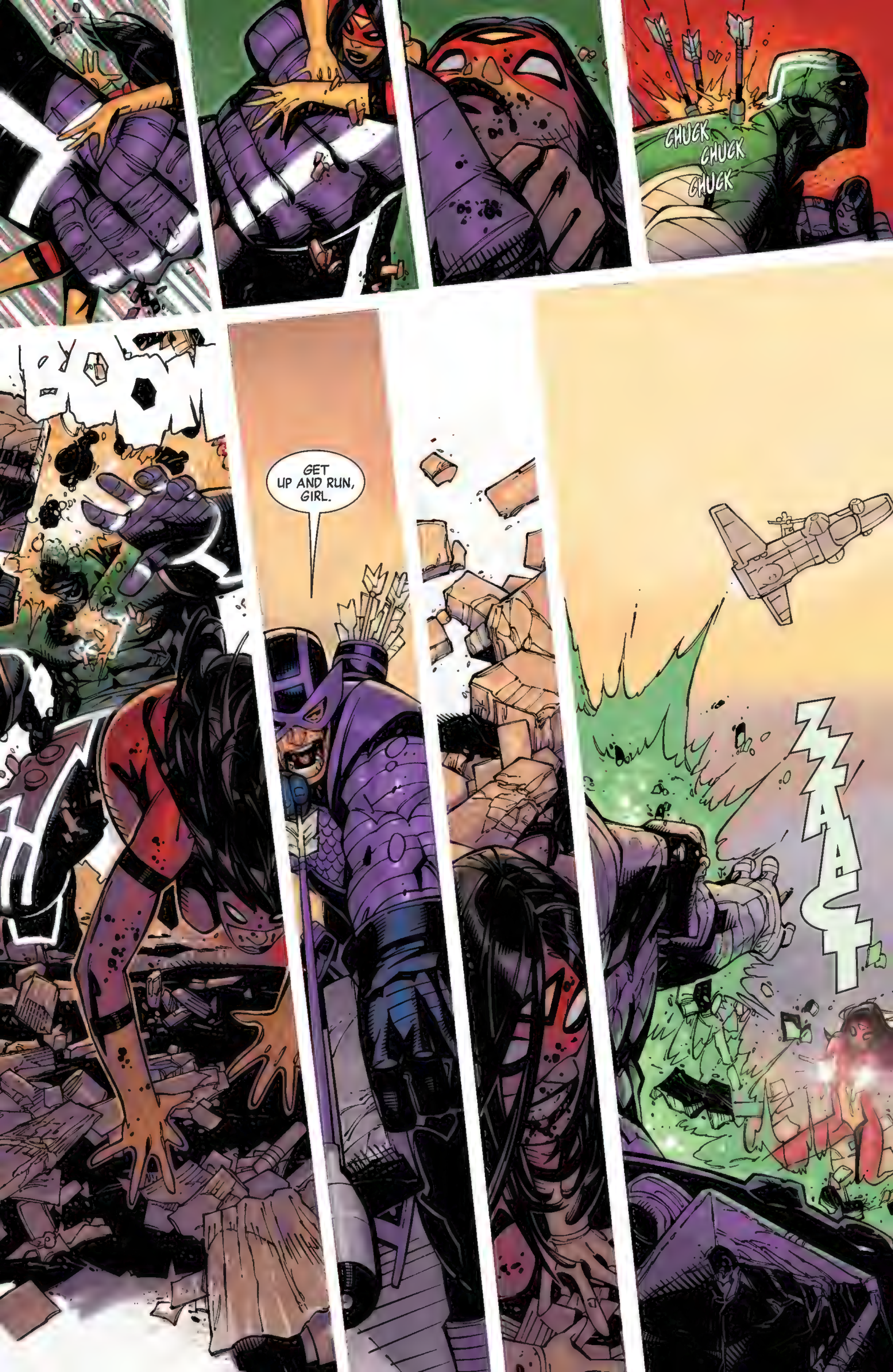

SPIDER-WOMAN TO AVENGERS.
WE'VE MADE CONTACT WITH THE ENTITY...
ANNNNNND IT KIND OF LOOKS LIKE THE HULK.
ᚹᚠᛗᚷ ᚠᛒᚠᚺᚠᚱᛒ ᛚᚱᚱᛗᛉ!!

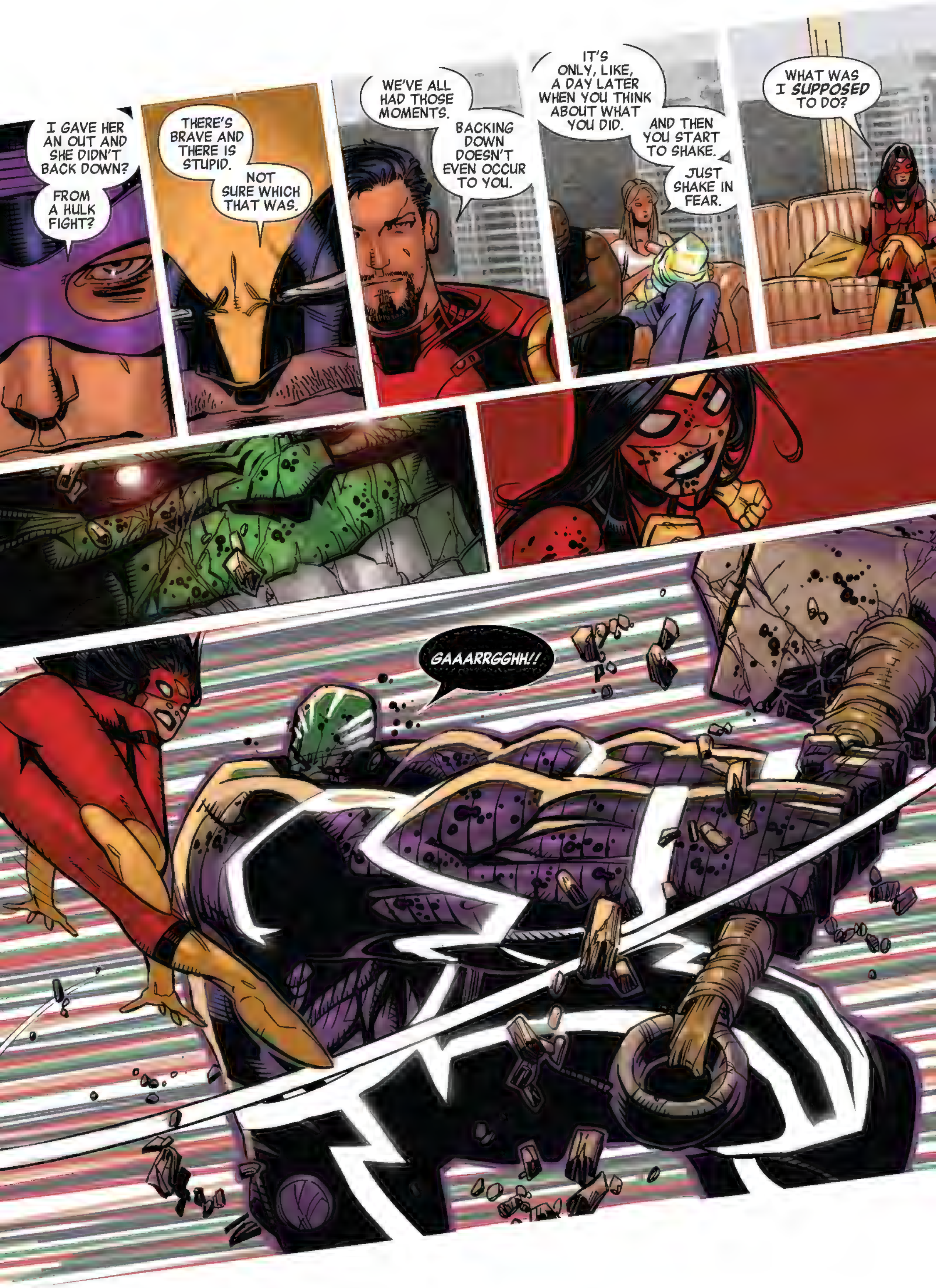

OH MY GOD, THE PROTECTOR IS DOWN!
DAMN IT!

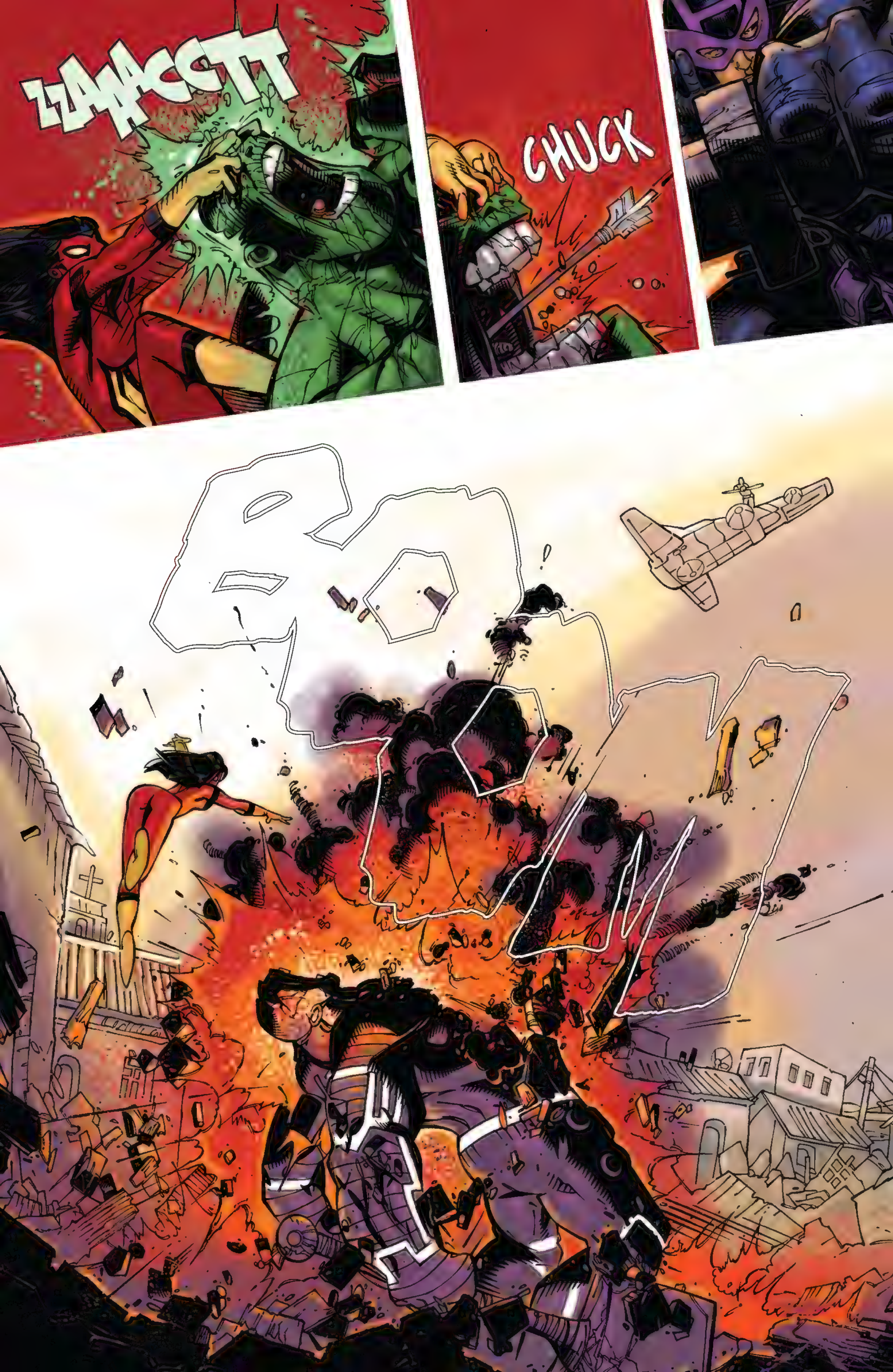


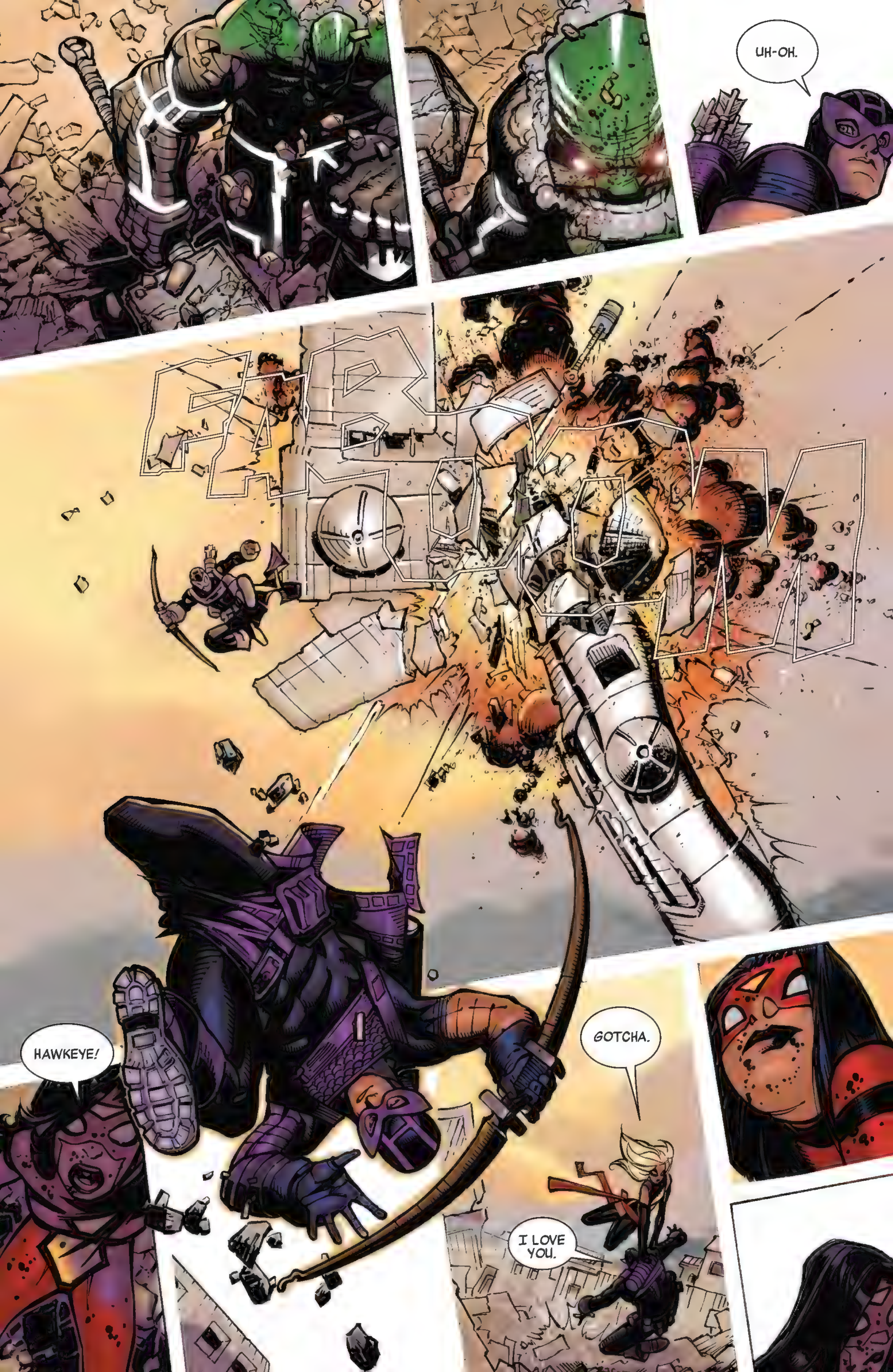

I WAS SAYIN' THAT--JUST ONCE, BEFORE I DIE, I WANT TO DO SOMETHING THAT REALLY MATTERS.
SHE WANTS TO DO THIS THING THAT WILL ERASE ALL THE SO-CALLED SINS OF HER PAST.
ALL THE TIME SHE SPENT AS AN AGENT OF HYDRA.
AND NOT ONLY THAT, BUT ALSO ERASE ALL THE TERRIBLE THINGS HER *PARENTS* DID AS AGENTS OF HYDRA.
BUT HERE'S THE THING...
IT AIN'T EVER GONNA BE JUST ONE THING.
IT AIN'T EVER GONNA BE JUST *ONE* MOMENT.
IT'S A LIFE OF MOMENTS. A WHOLE LIFE...
YOU ADD THEM ALL UP AT THE END AND *THEN* YOU SEE WHAT YOU GET. THEN YOU SEE WHO YOU WERE.
I TOLD HER THIS, TOO.
IF YOU GO CHASING THIS MOMENT OF REDEMPTION OR WHATEVER SHE CALLS IT...YOU'RE GOING TO DRIVE YOURSELF INSANE.
OR GET YOURSELF KILLED.
I HAD NO IDEA THEY WOULD BE FACE-TO-FACE WITH A HULK.
ESPECIALLY ONE IN THAT CONDITION.
IF I'D KNOWN, I WOULD HAVE ESTABLISHED A BETTER FRONT.
NOT THAT THEY AREN'T FIGHTERS AND HEROES.
BUT AT ONE POINT IT'S SIMPLY STATISTICS...
THE MATH--IT JUST WASN'T ON THEIR SIDE.
THE PROTECTOR WAS DOWN BEFORE WE TOUCHED THE GROUND.
AND I STILL DIDN'T KNOW WHAT *EXACTLY* HE WAS CAPABLE OF, SO--
I KNOW I SAID I WANTED TO DO SOMETHING SO I CAN LOOK BACK AT MY LIFE AND *NOT* BE COMPLETELY DISGUSTED...
BUT, LISTEN, FIGHTING *THE HULK* WASN'T IT.
BUT THE HELL IF I WAS GOING TO RUN FROM IT.

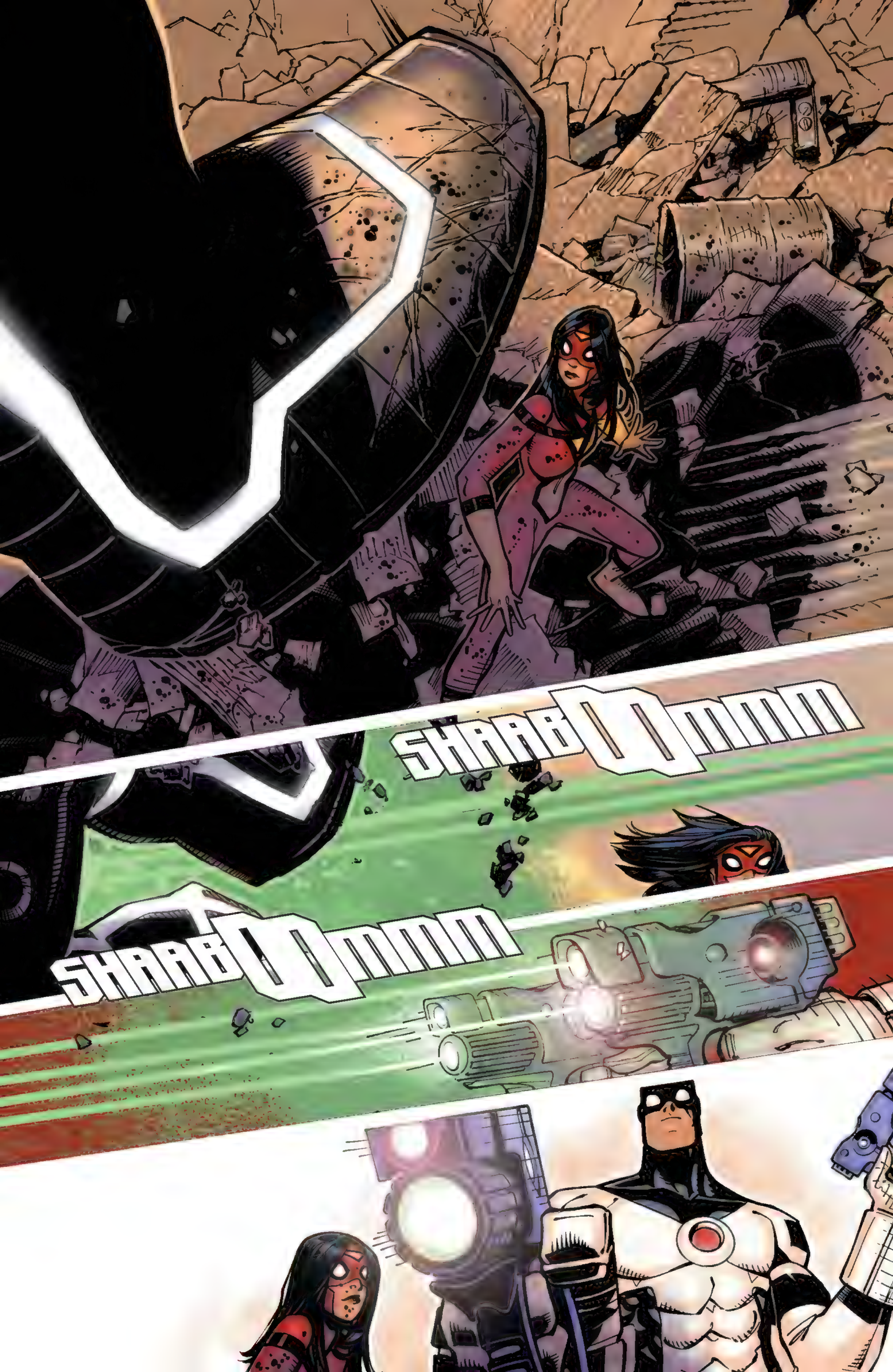

AAAGGHH!!
ZZAACCT
HAARRGH!!
AAAGGHH!!
AGH!
ZZAACTTT
AARRGH!

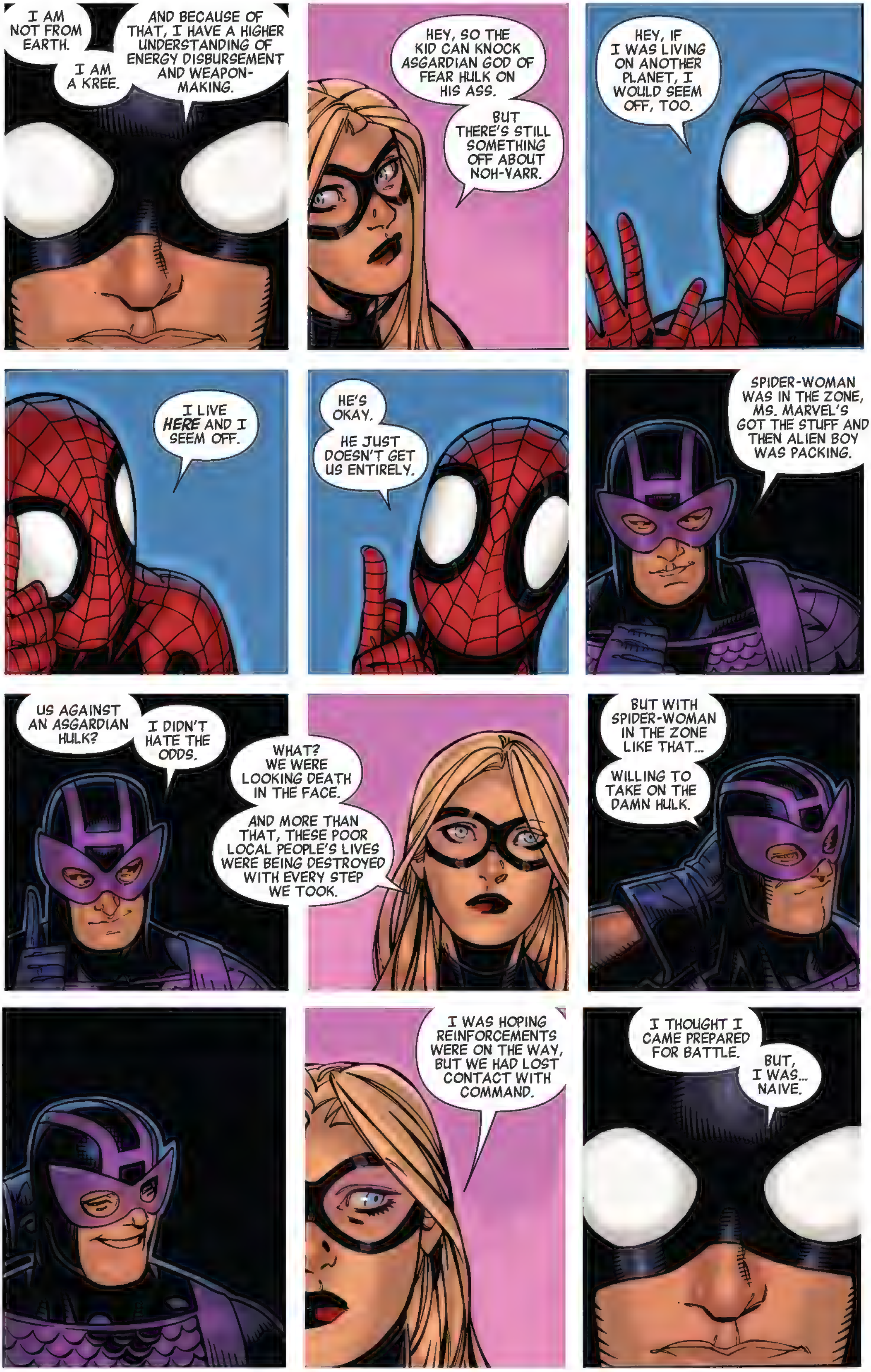

CHUCK
CHUCK
CHUCK
GET UP AND RUN, GIRL.
ZAACT

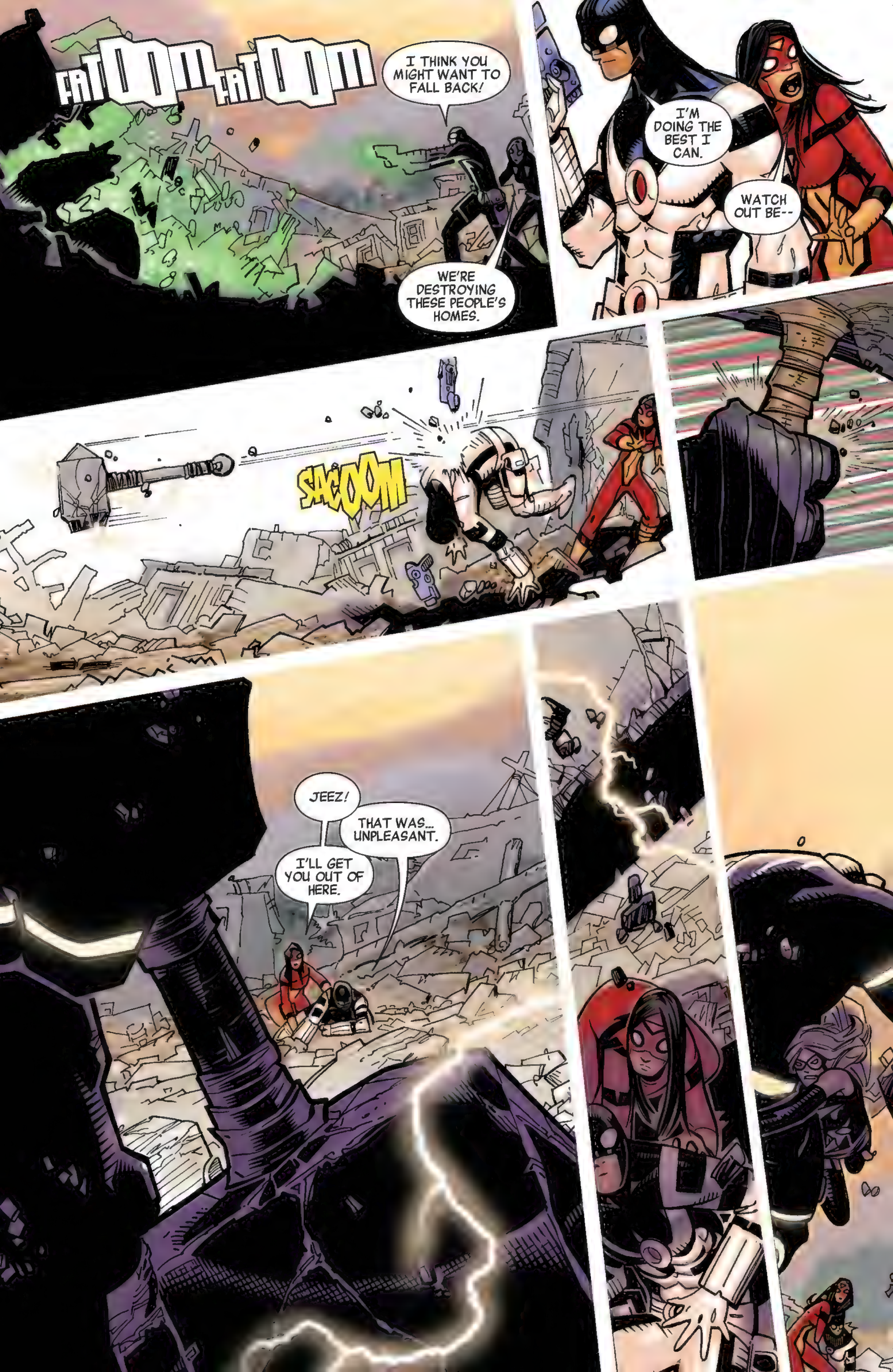

I GAVE HER AN OUT AND SHE DIDN'T BACK DOWN?
FROM A HULK FIGHT?
THERE'S BRAVE AND THERE IS STUPID.
NOT SURE WHICH THAT WAS.
WE'VE ALL HAD THOSE MOMENTS.
BACKING DOWN DOESN'T EVEN OCCUR TO YOU.
IT'S ONLY, LIKE, A DAY LATER WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU DID.
AND THEN YOU START TO SHAKE.
JUST SHAKE IN FEAR.
WHAT WAS I *SUPPOSED* TO DO?
GAAARRGGHH!!

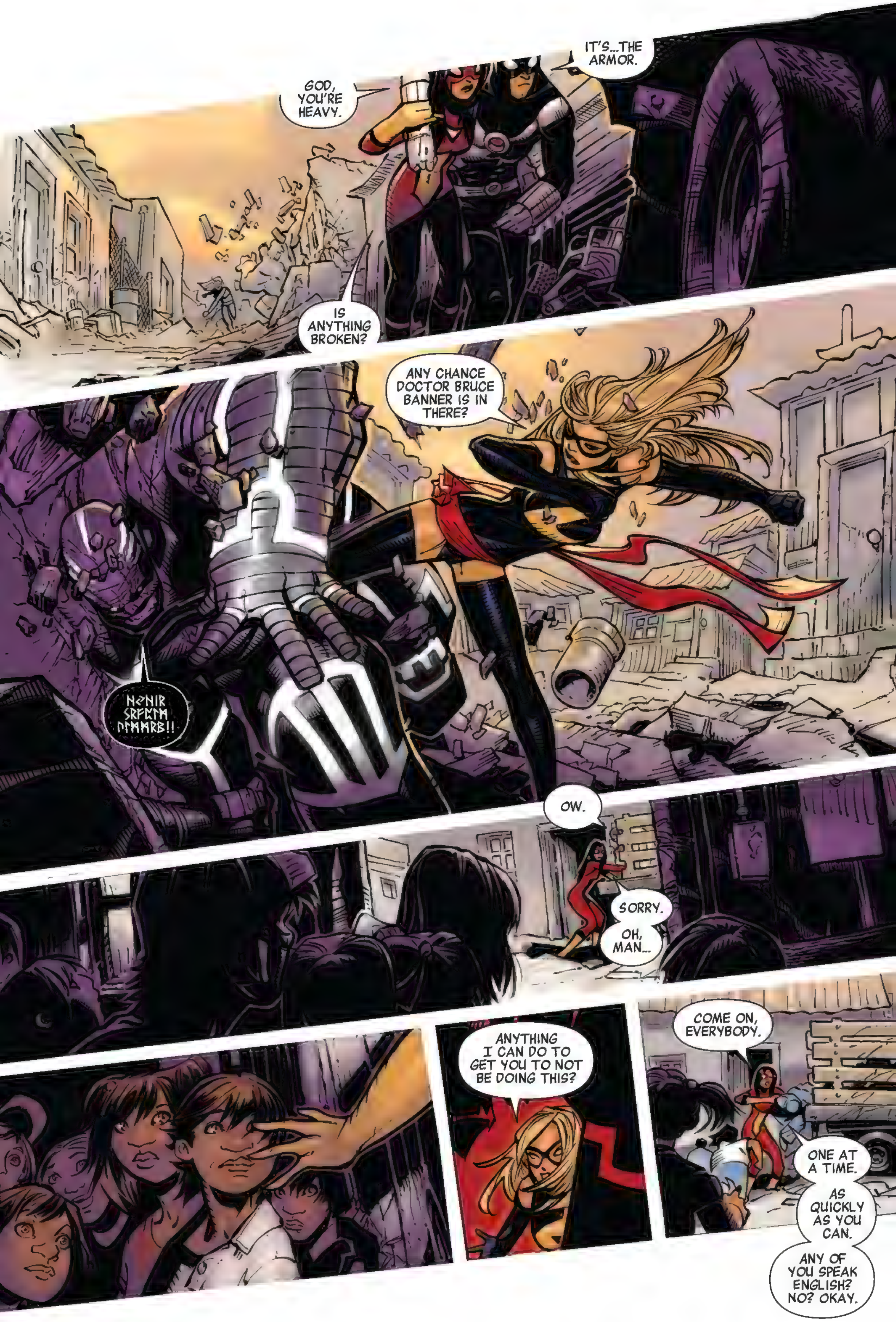

ZZAACCTT
CHUCK
BOOM

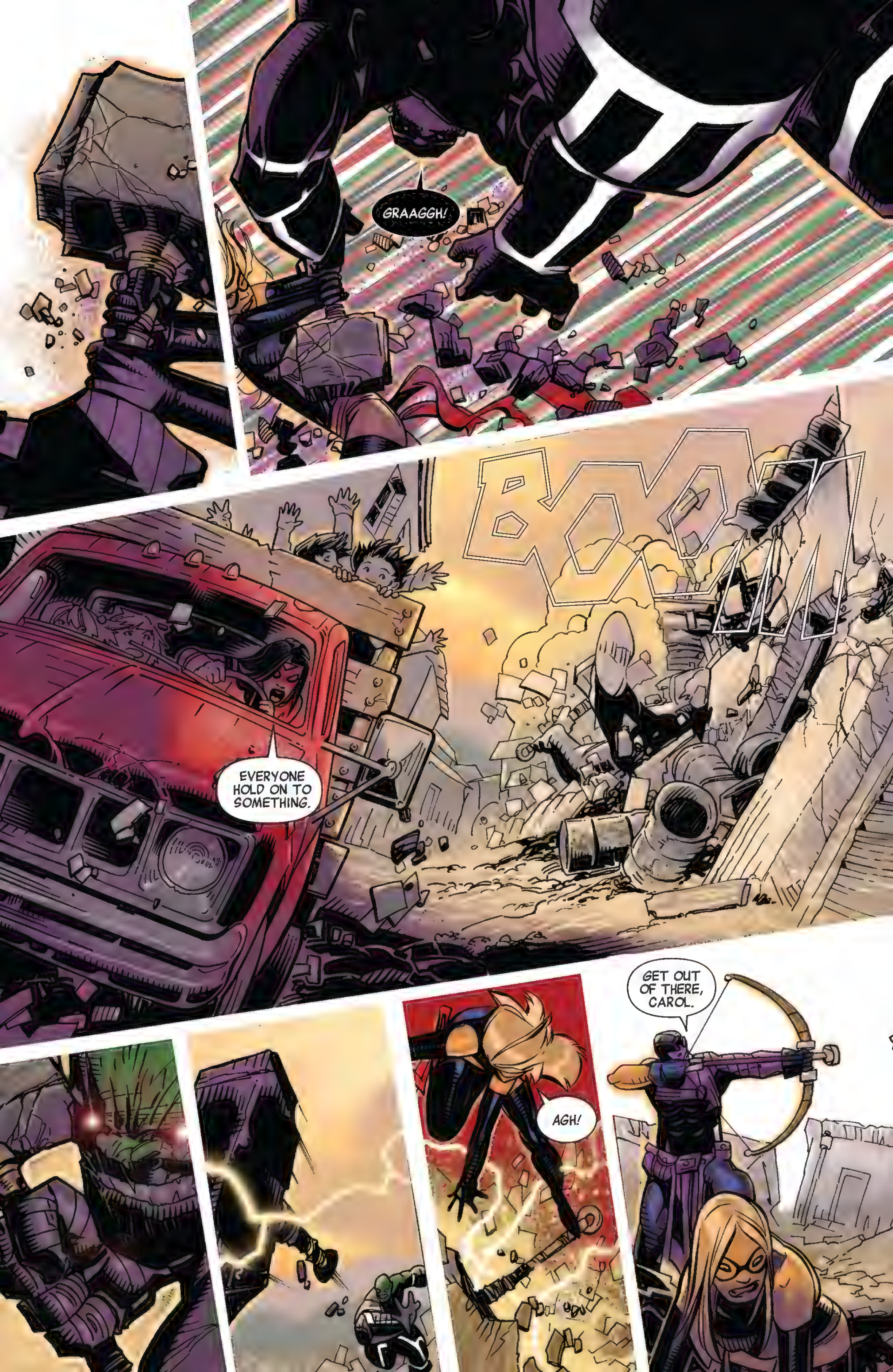

UH-OH.
HAWKEYE!
GOTCHA.
I LOVE YOU.

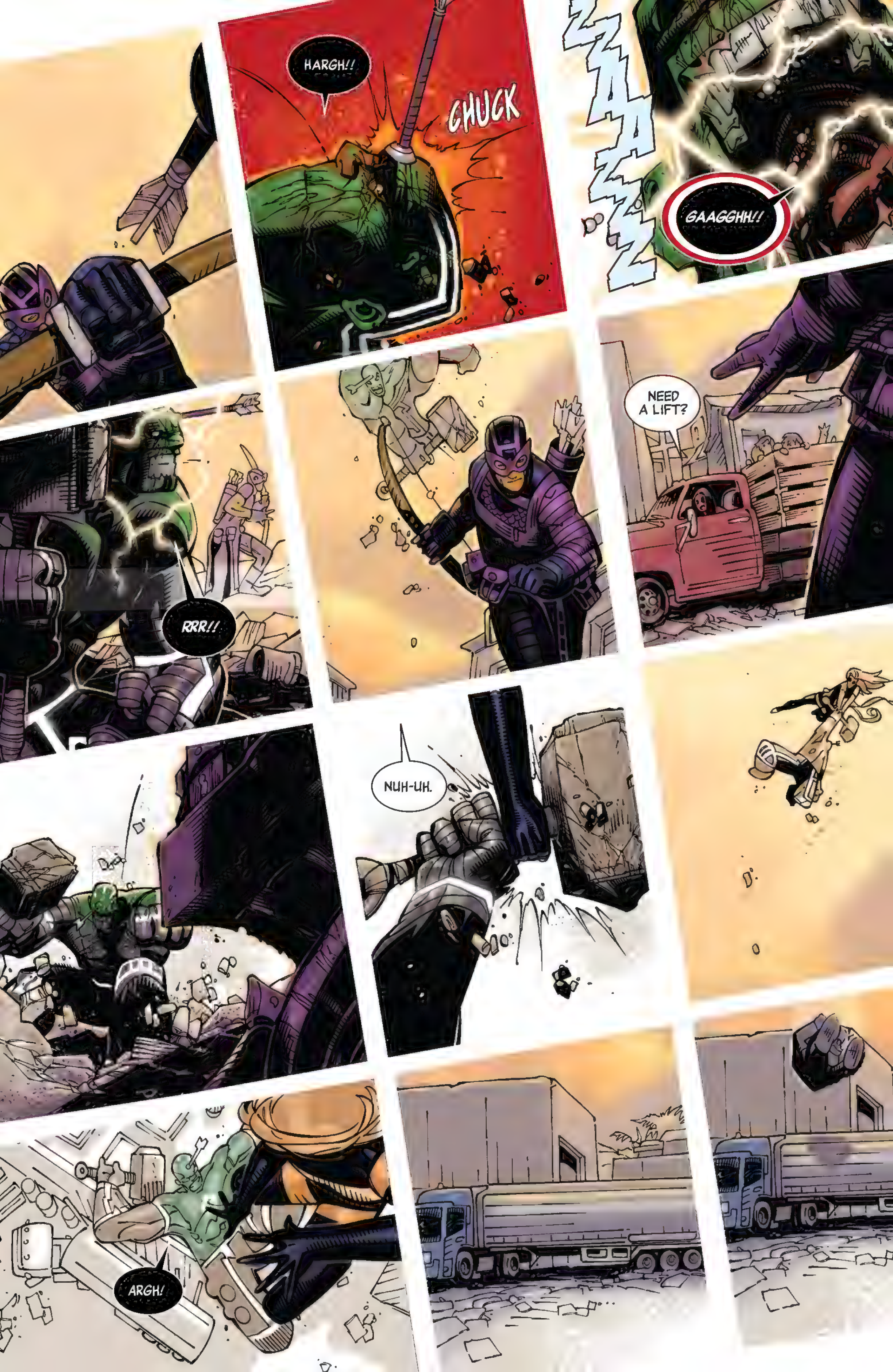

SHAABOOMMMM
SHAABOOMMMM

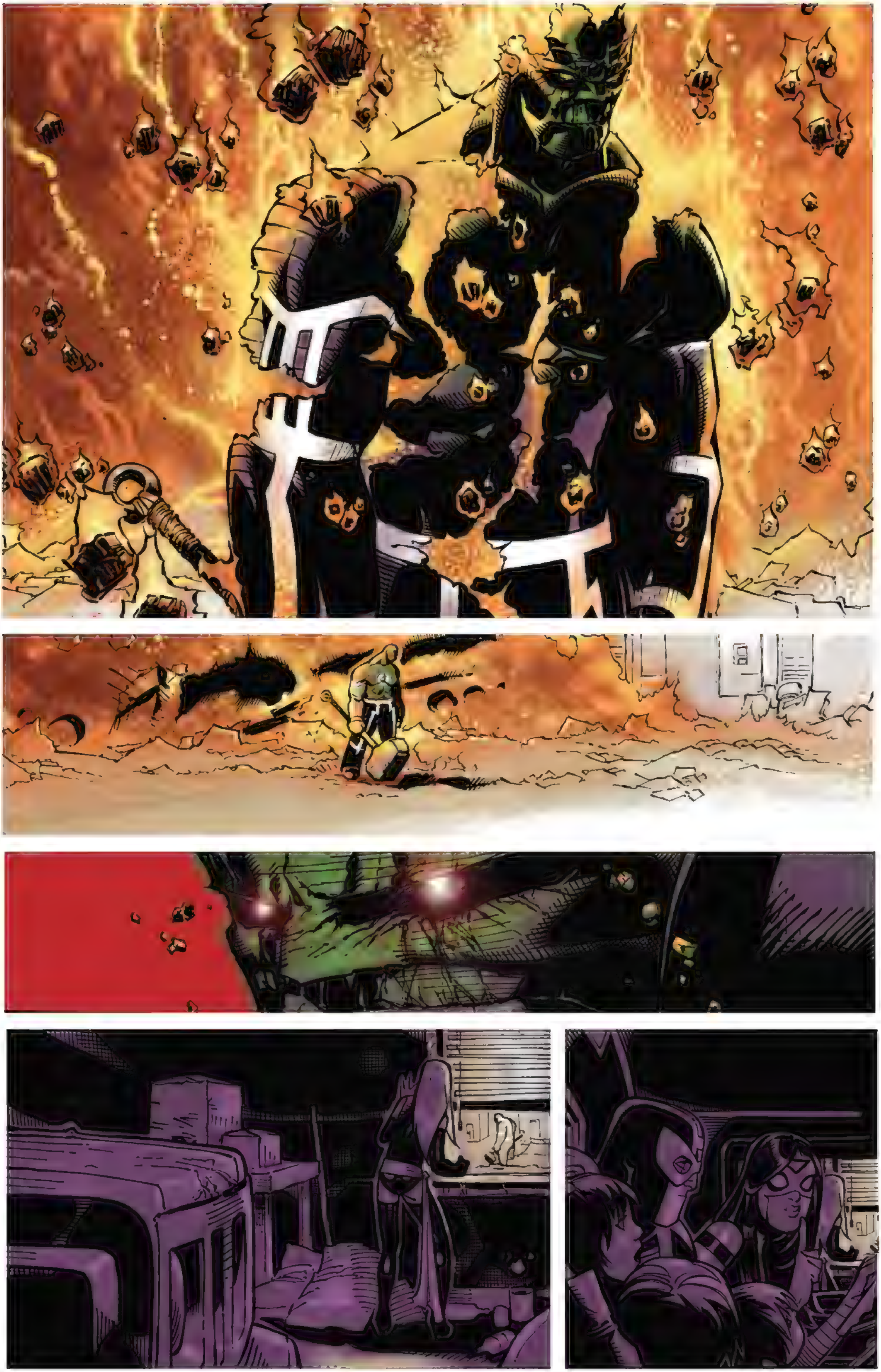

I AM NOT FROM EARTH.
I AM A KREE.
AND BECAUSE OF THAT, I HAVE A HIGHER UNDERSTANDING OF ENERGY DISBURSEMENT AND WEAPON-MAKING.
HEY, SO THE KID CAN KNOCK ASGARDIAN GOD OF FEAR HULK ON HIS ASS.
BUT THERE'S STILL SOMETHING OFF ABOUT NOH-VARR.
HEY, IF I WAS LIVING ON ANOTHER PLANET, I WOULD SEEM OFF, TOO.
I LIVE *HERE* AND I SEEM OFF.
HE'S OKAY.
HE JUST DOESN'T GET US ENTIRELY.
SPIDER-WOMAN WAS IN THE ZONE, MS. MARVEL'S GOT THE STUFF AND THEN ALIEN BOY WAS PACKING.
US AGAINST AN ASGARDIAN HULK?
I DIDN'T HATE THE ODDS.
WHAT? WE WERE LOOKING DEATH IN THE FACE.
AND MORE THAN THAT, THESE POOR LOCAL PEOPLE'S LIVES WERE BEING DESTROYED WITH EVERY STEP WE TOOK.
BUT WITH SPIDER-WOMAN IN THE ZONE LIKE THAT...
WILLING TO TAKE ON THE DAMN HULK.
I WAS HOPING REINFORCEMENTS WERE ON THE WAY, BUT WE HAD LOST CONTACT WITH COMMAND.
I THOUGHT I CAME PREPARED FOR BATTLE.
BUT, I WAS... NAIVE.

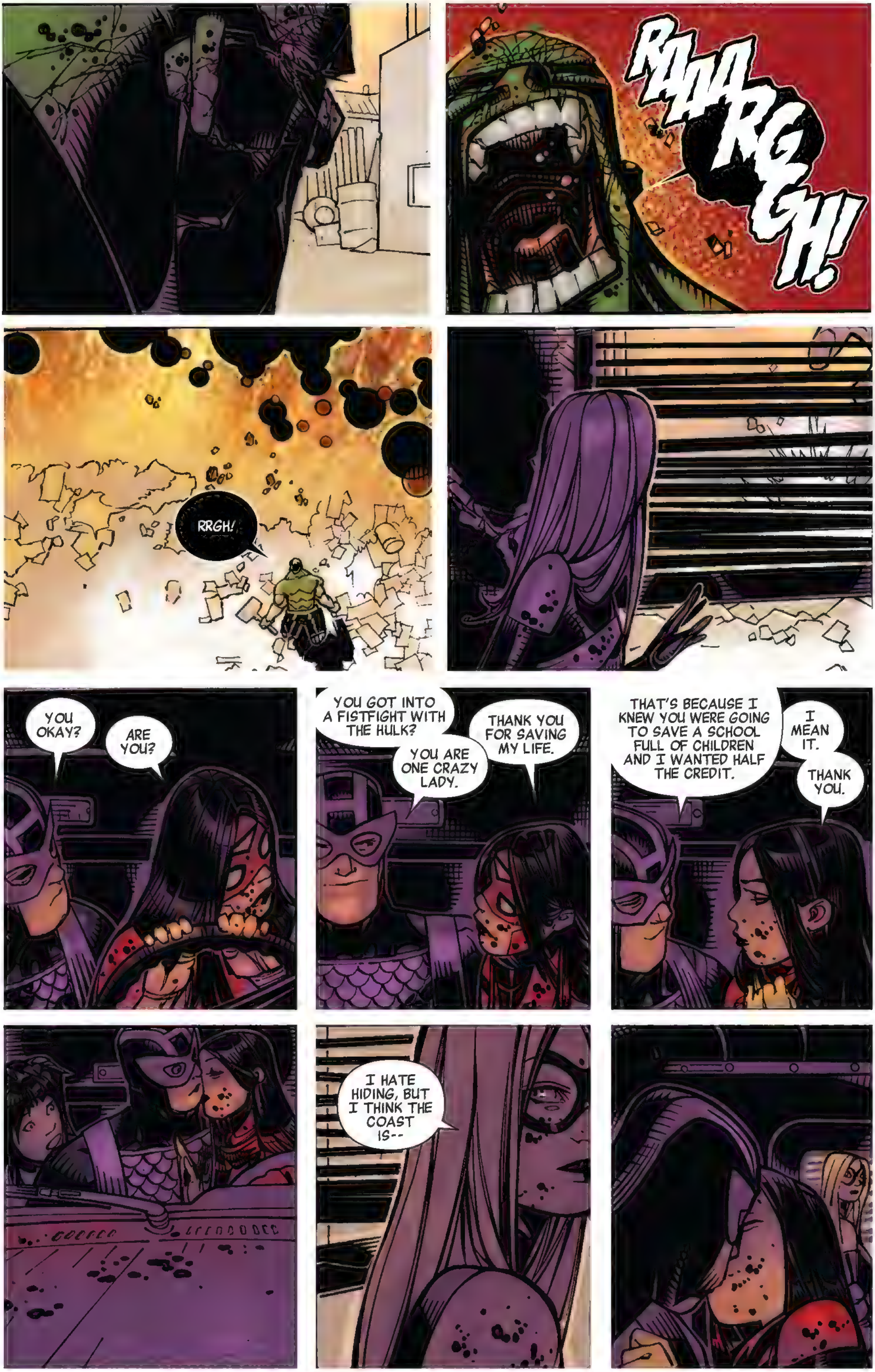

FATOOM FATOOM
I THINK YOU MIGHT WANT TO FALL BACK!
WE'RE DESTROYING THESE PEOPLE'S HOMES.
I'M DOING THE BEST I CAN.
WATCH OUT BE--
SACOOM
JEEZ!
THAT WAS... UNPLEASANT.
I'LL GET YOU OUT OF HERE.

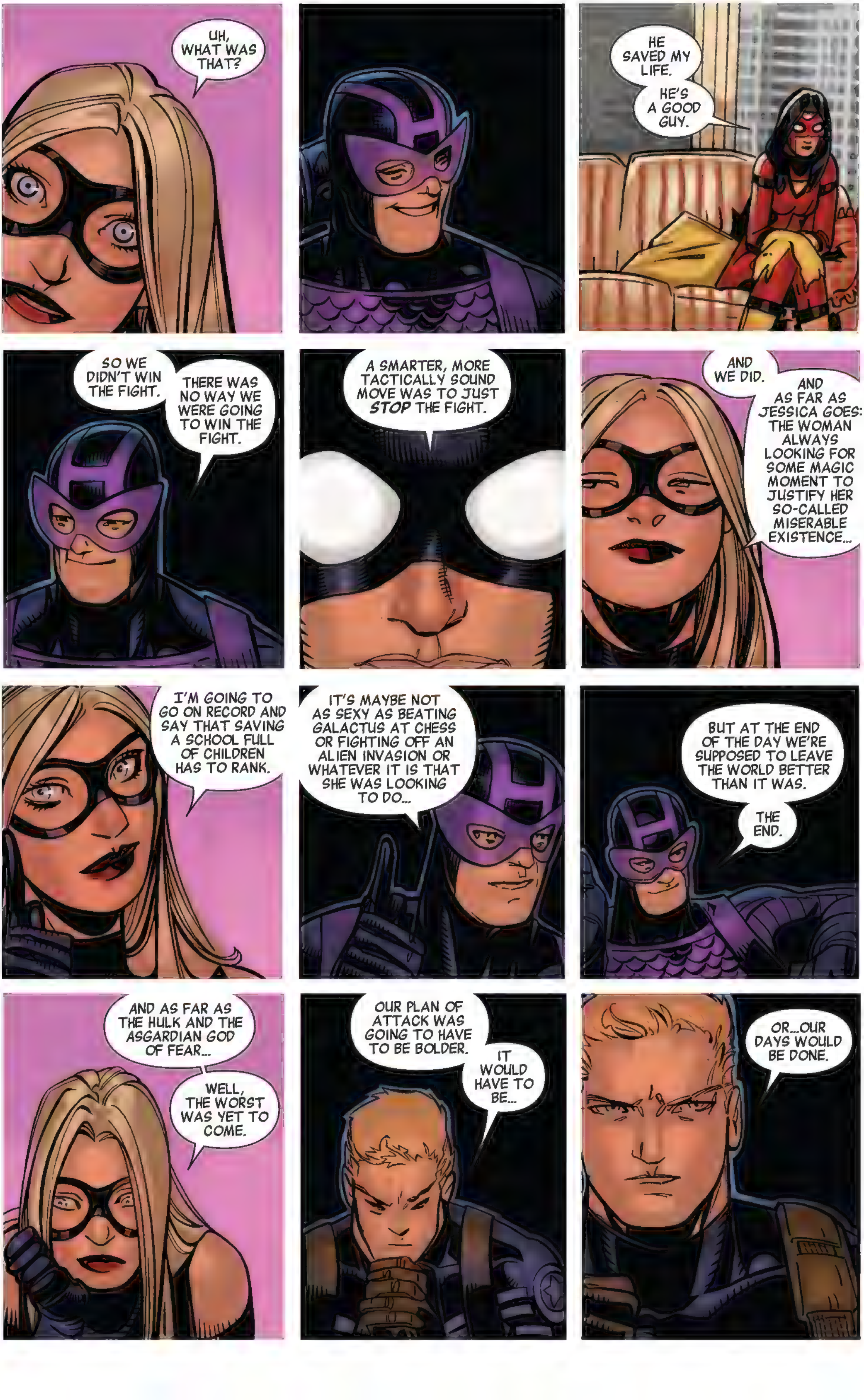

GOD, YOU'RE HEAVY.
IT'S...THE ARMOR.
IS ANYTHING BROKEN?
ANY CHANCE DOCTOR BRUCE BANNER IS IN THERE?
ᚺᛖᚺᛁᚱ ᛊᚱᚠᚲᛚᛗ ᛚᛚᛗᚨᚱᛒ!!
OW.
SORRY.
OH, MAN...
ANYTHING I CAN DO TO GET YOU TO NOT BE DOING THIS?
COME ON, EVERYBODY.
ONE AT A TIME.
AS QUICKLY AS YOU CAN.
ANY OF YOU SPEAK ENGLISH? NO? OKAY.


GRAAGGH!
BOOM
EVERYONE HOLD ON TO SOMETHING.
AGH!
GET OUT OF THERE, CAROL.

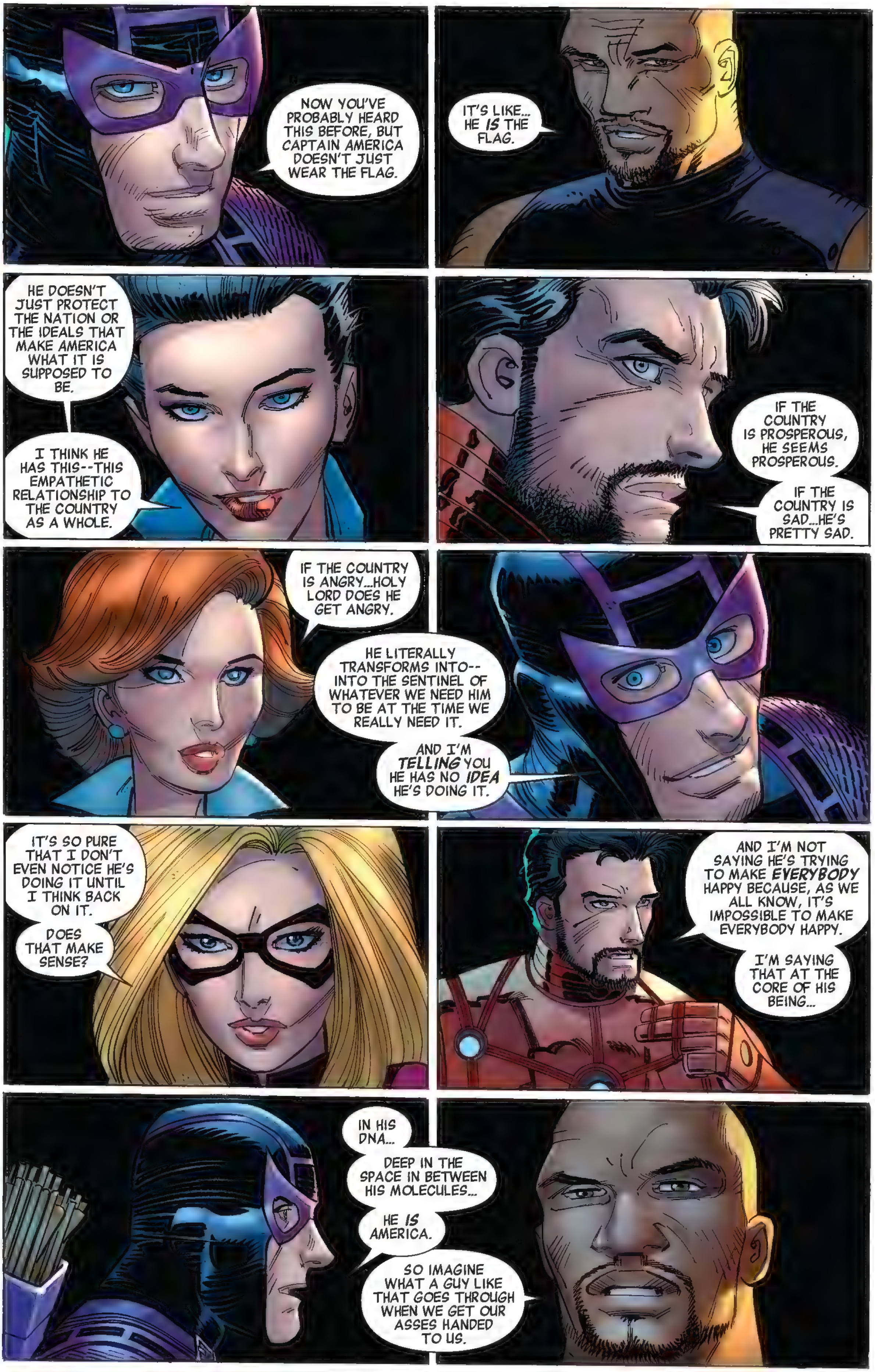

HARGH!!
CHUCK
ZZAAZZZ
GAAGGHH!!
RRR!!
NEED A LIFT?
NUH-UH.
ARGH!

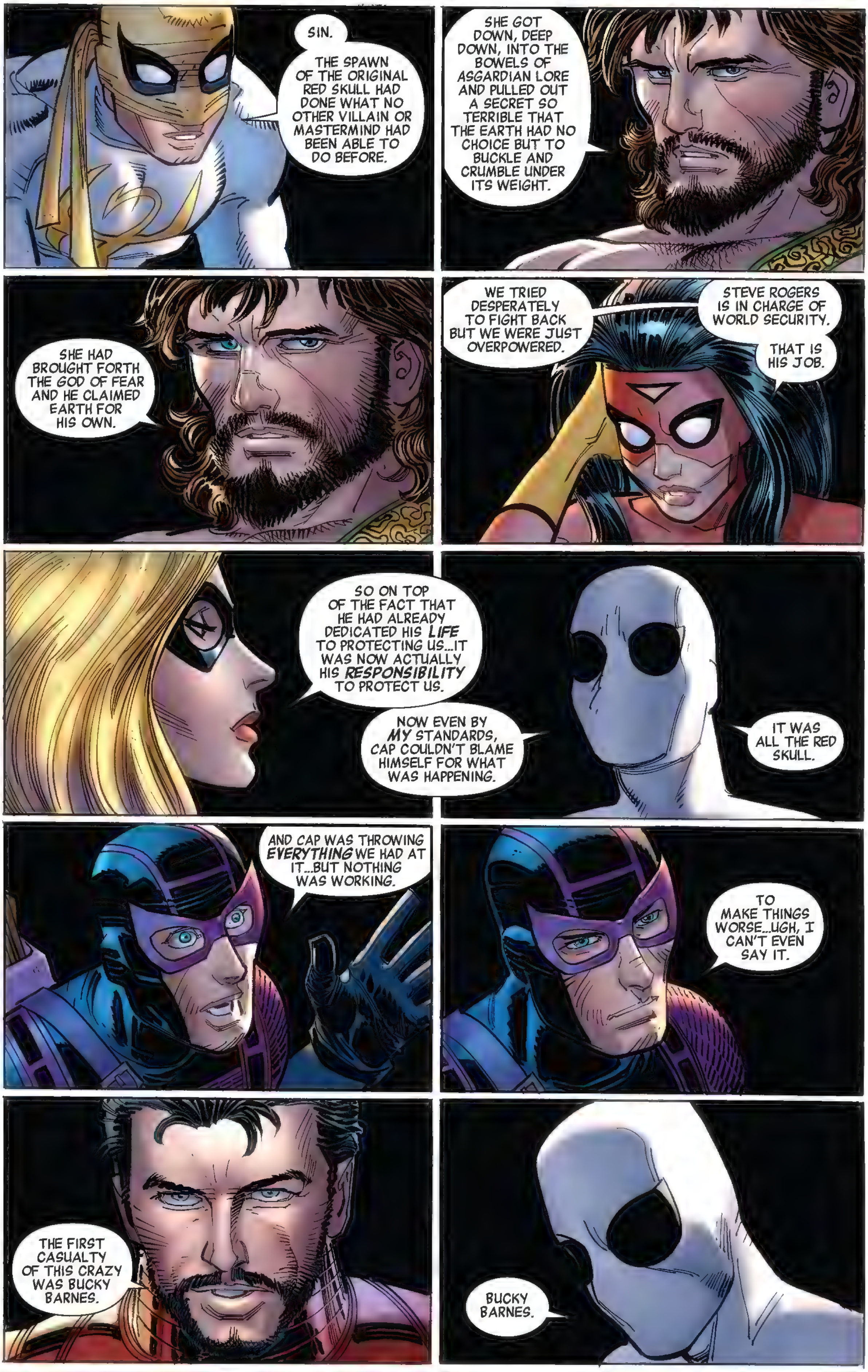


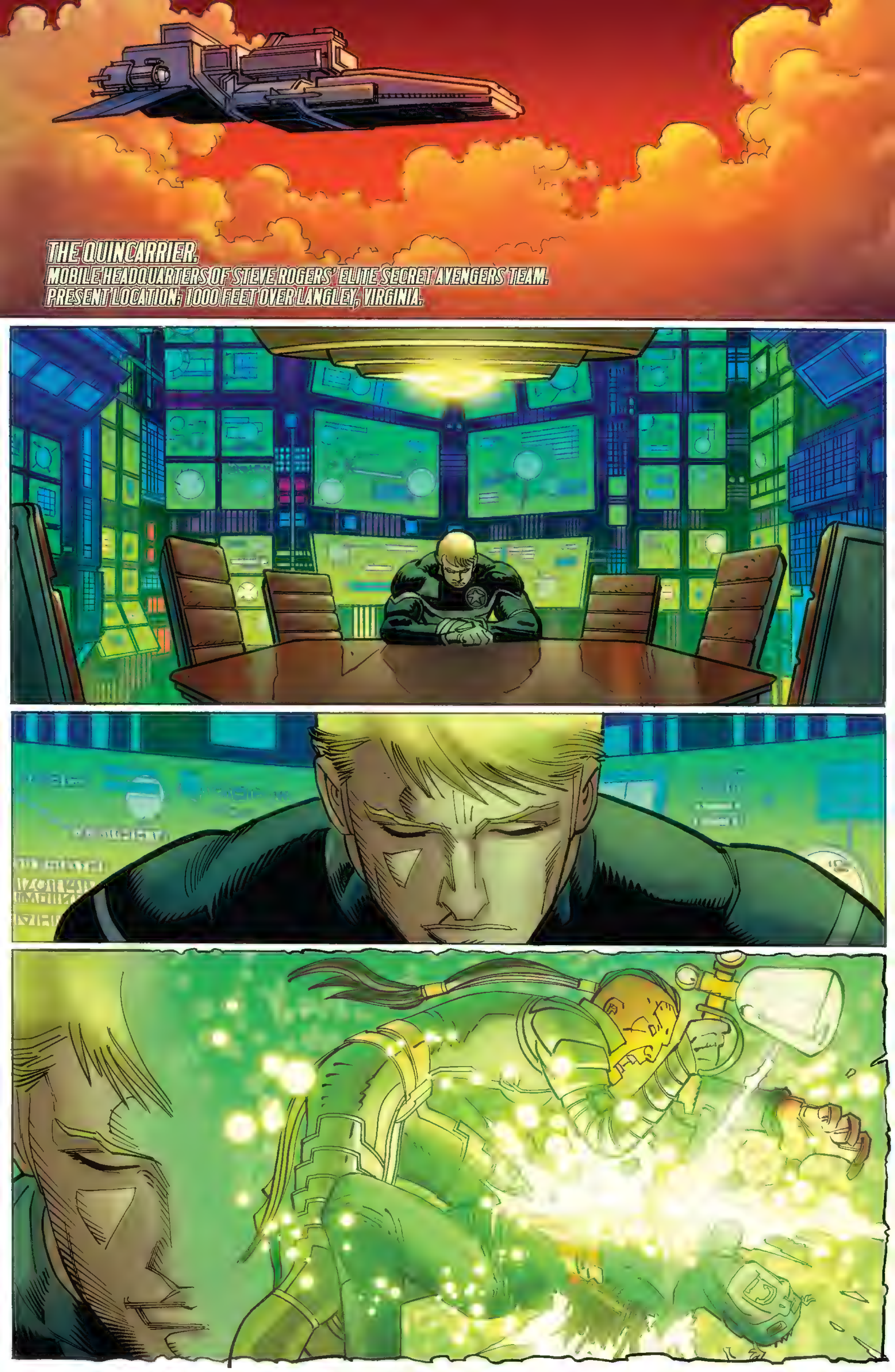

RAAARGGH!
RRGH!
YOU OKAY?
ARE YOU?
YOU GOT INTO A FISTFIGHT WITH THE HULK?
YOU ARE ONE CRAZY LADY.
THANK YOU FOR SAVING MY LIFE.
THAT'S BECAUSE I KNEW YOU WERE GOING TO SAVE A SCHOOL FULL OF CHILDREN AND I WANTED HALF THE CREDIT.
I MEAN IT.
THANK YOU.
I HATE HIDING, BUT I THINK THE COAST IS--

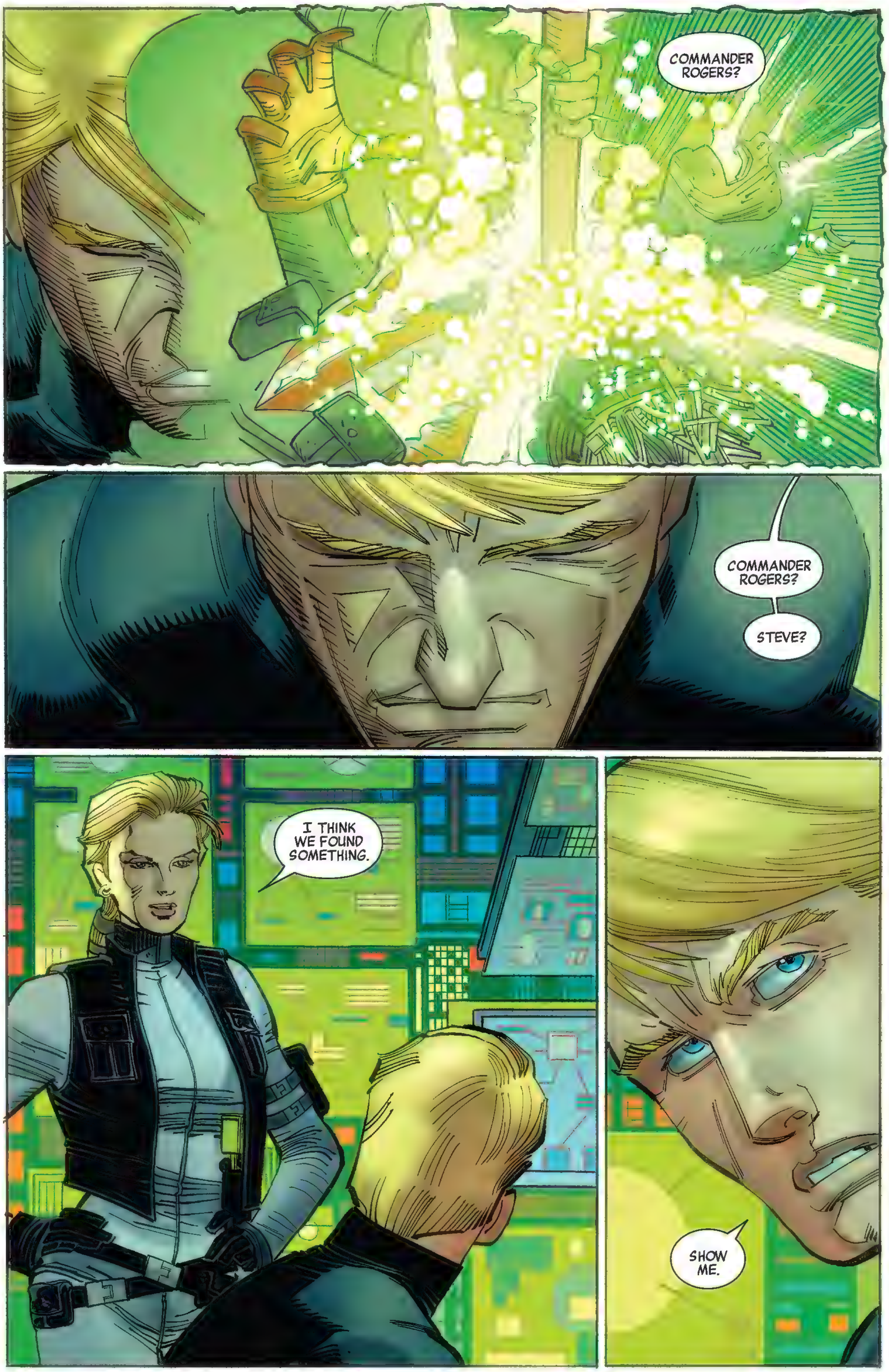

UH, WHAT WAS THAT?
HE SAVED MY LIFE.
HE'S A GOOD GUY.
SO WE DIDN'T WIN THE FIGHT.
THERE WAS NO WAY WE WERE GOING TO WIN THE FIGHT.
A SMARTER, MORE TACTICALLY SOUND MOVE WAS TO JUST *STOP* THE FIGHT.
AND WE DID.
AND AS FAR AS JESSICA GOES: THE WOMAN ALWAYS LOOKING FOR SOME MAGIC MOMENT TO JUSTIFY HER SO-CALLED MISERABLE EXISTENCE...
I'M GOING TO GO ON RECORD AND SAY THAT SAVING A SCHOOL FULL OF CHILDREN HAS TO RANK.
IT'S MAYBE NOT AS SEXY AS BEATING GALACTUS AT CHESS OR FIGHTING OFF AN ALIEN INVASION OR WHATEVER IT IS THAT SHE WAS LOOKING TO DO...
BUT AT THE END OF THE DAY WE'RE SUPPOSED TO LEAVE THE WORLD BETTER THAN IT WAS.
THE END.
AND AS FAR AS THE HULK AND THE ASGARDIAN GOD OF FEAR...
WELL, THE WORST WAS YET TO COME.
OUR PLAN OF ATTACK WAS GOING TO HAVE TO BE BOLDER.
IT WOULD HAVE TO BE...
OR...OUR DAYS WOULD BE DONE.

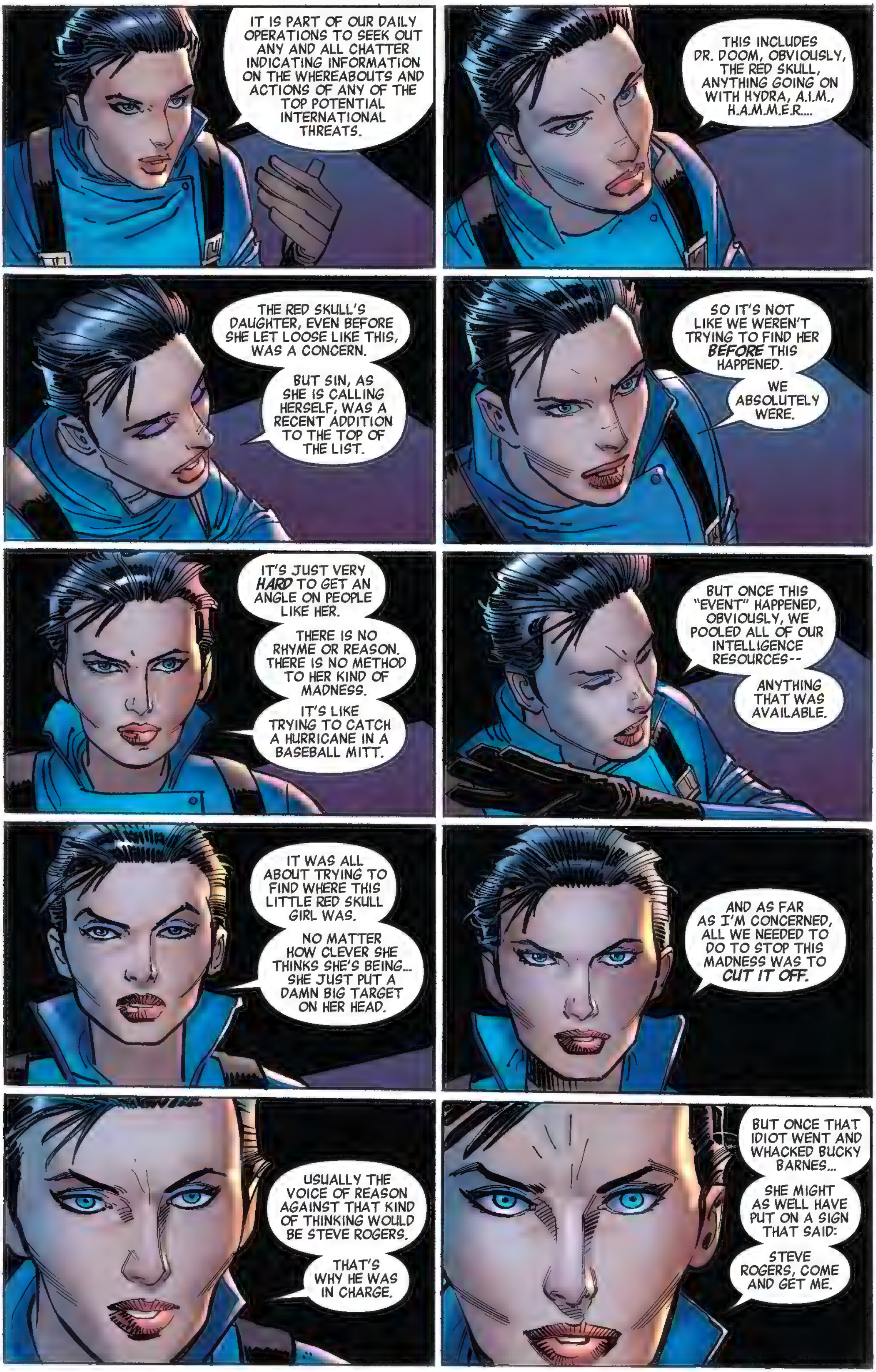
AVENGERS #16

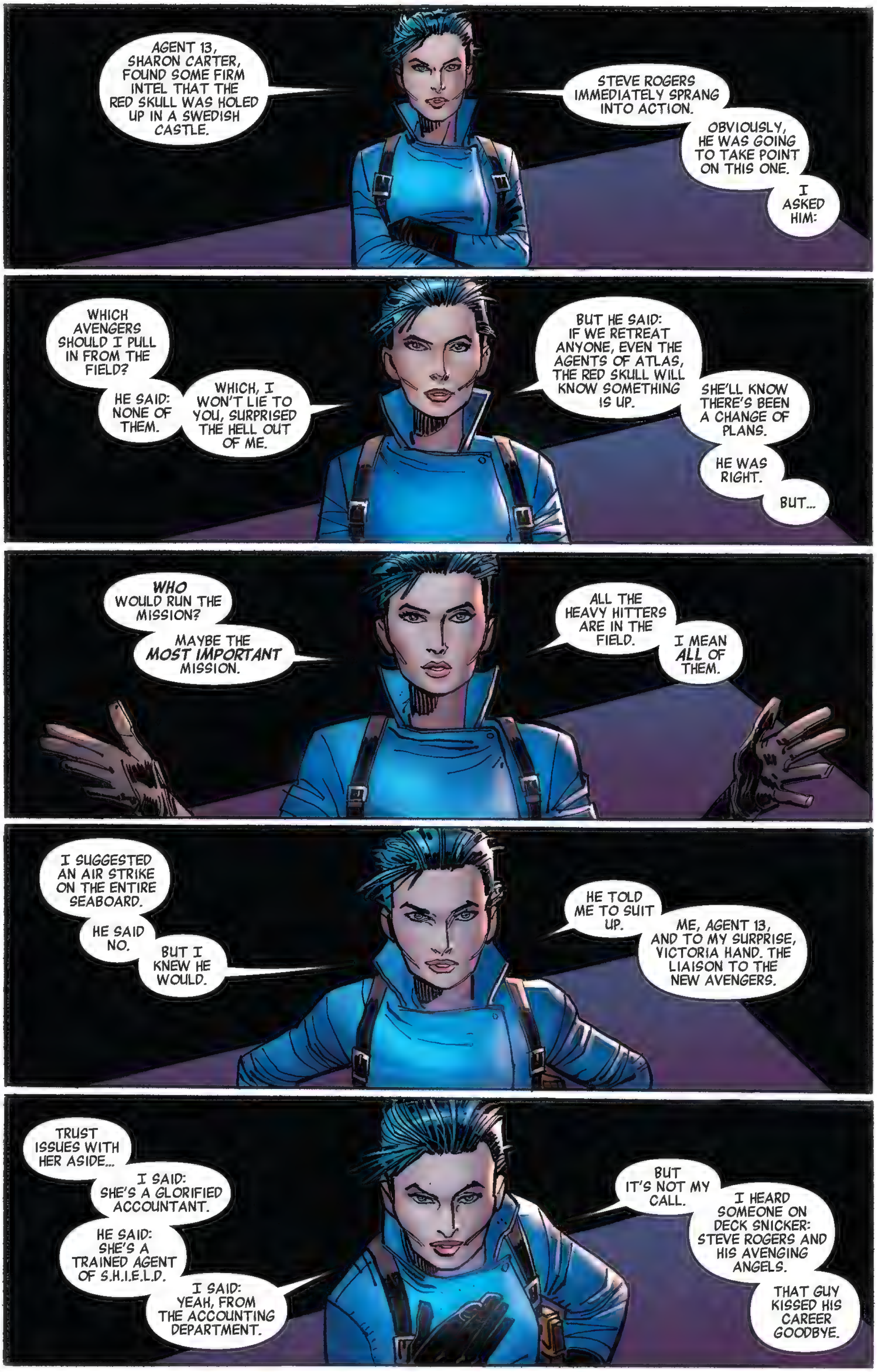

NOW YOU'VE PROBABLY HEARD THIS BEFORE, BUT CAPTAIN AMERICA DOESN'T JUST WEAR THE FLAG.
IT'S LIKE... HE *IS* THE FLAG.
HE DOESN'T JUST PROTECT THE NATION OR THE IDEALS THAT MAKE AMERICA WHAT IT IS SUPPOSED TO BE.
I THINK HE HAS THIS--THIS EMPATHETIC RELATIONSHIP TO THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE.
IF THE COUNTRY IS PROSPEROUS, HE SEEMS PROSPEROUS.
IF THE COUNTRY IS SAD...HE'S PRETTY SAD.
IF THE COUNTRY IS ANGRY...HOLY LORD DOES HE GET ANGRY.
HE LITERALLY TRANSFORMS INTO--INTO THE SENTINEL OF WHATEVER WE NEED HIM TO BE AT THE TIME WE REALLY NEED IT.
AND I'M ***TELLING*** YOU HE HAS NO ***IDEA*** HE'S DOING IT.
IT'S SO PURE THAT I DON'T EVEN NOTICE HE'S DOING IT UNTIL I THINK BACK ON IT.
DOES THAT MAKE SENSE?
AND I'M NOT SAYING HE'S TRYING TO MAKE ***EVERYBODY*** HAPPY BECAUSE, AS WE ALL KNOW, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO MAKE EVERYBODY HAPPY.
I'M SAYING THAT AT THE CORE OF HIS BEING...
IN HIS DNA...
DEEP IN THE SPACE IN BETWEEN HIS MOLECULES...
HE *IS* AMERICA.
SO IMAGINE WHAT A GUY LIKE THAT GOES THROUGH WHEN WE GET OUR ASSES HANDED TO US.

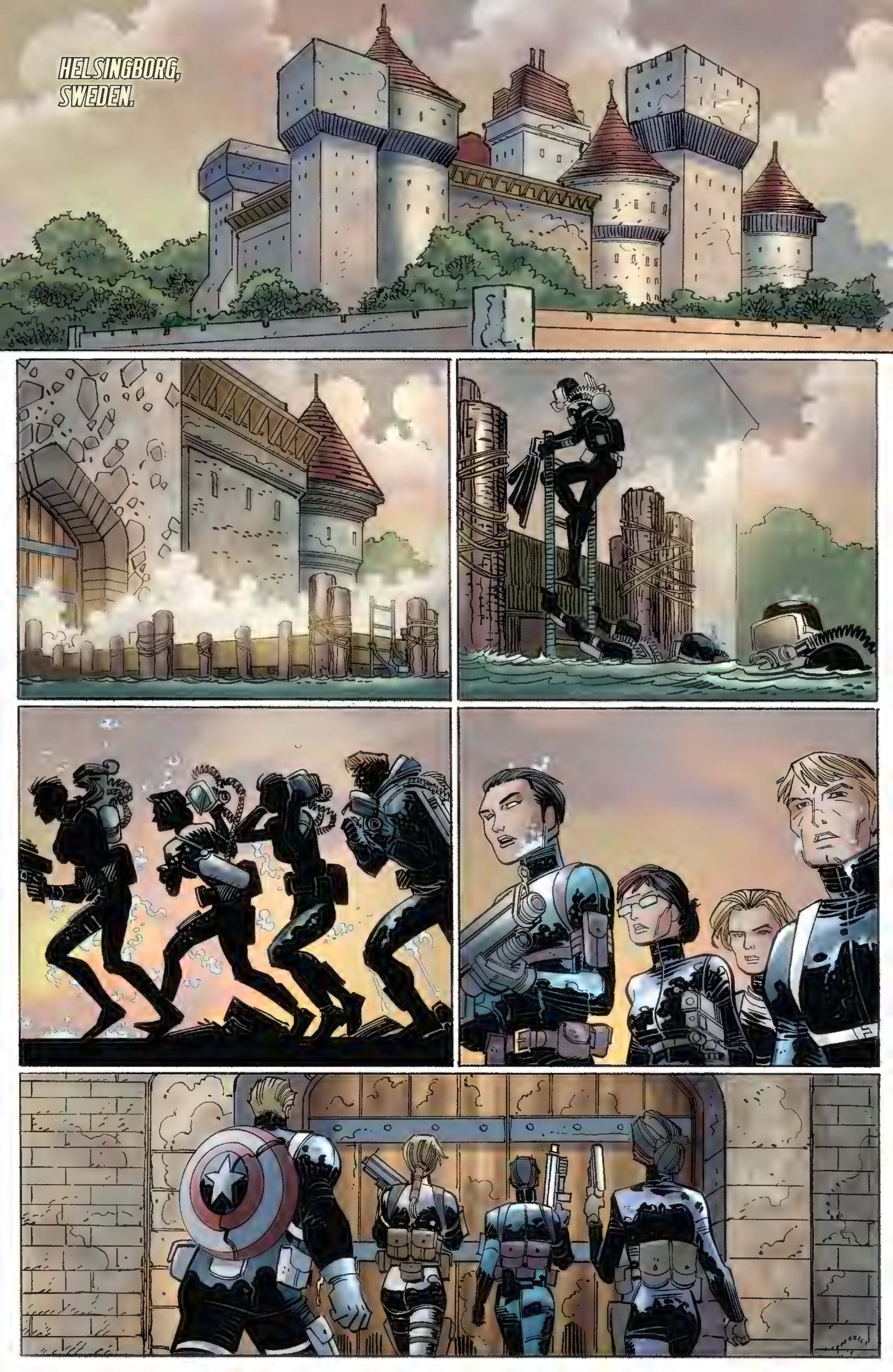

SIN.
THE SPAWN OF THE ORIGINAL RED SKULL HAD DONE WHAT NO OTHER VILLAIN OR MASTERMIND HAD BEEN ABLE TO DO BEFORE.
SHE GOT DOWN, DEEP DOWN, INTO THE BOWELS OF ASGARDIAN LORE AND PULLED OUT A SECRET SO TERRIBLE THAT THE EARTH HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO BUCKLE AND CRUMBLE UNDER ITS WEIGHT.
SHE HAD BROUGHT FORTH THE GOD OF FEAR AND HE CLAIMED EARTH FOR HIS OWN.
WE TRIED DESPERATELY TO FIGHT BACK BUT WE WERE JUST OVERPOWERED.
STEVE ROGERS IS IN CHARGE OF WORLD SECURITY.
THAT IS HIS JOB.
SO ON TOP OF THE FACT THAT HE HAD ALREADY DEDICATED HIS *LIFE* TO PROTECTING US...IT WAS NOW ACTUALLY HIS *RESPONSIBILITY* TO PROTECT US.
NOW EVEN BY *MY* STANDARDS, CAP COULDN'T BLAME HIMSELF FOR WHAT WAS HAPPENING.
IT WAS ALL THE RED SKULL.
AND CAP WAS THROWING *EVERYTHING* WE HAD AT IT...BUT NOTHING WAS WORKING.
TO MAKE THINGS WORSE...UGH, I CAN'T EVEN SAY IT.
THE FIRST CASUALTY OF THIS CRAZY WAS BUCKY BARNES.
BUCKY BARNES.

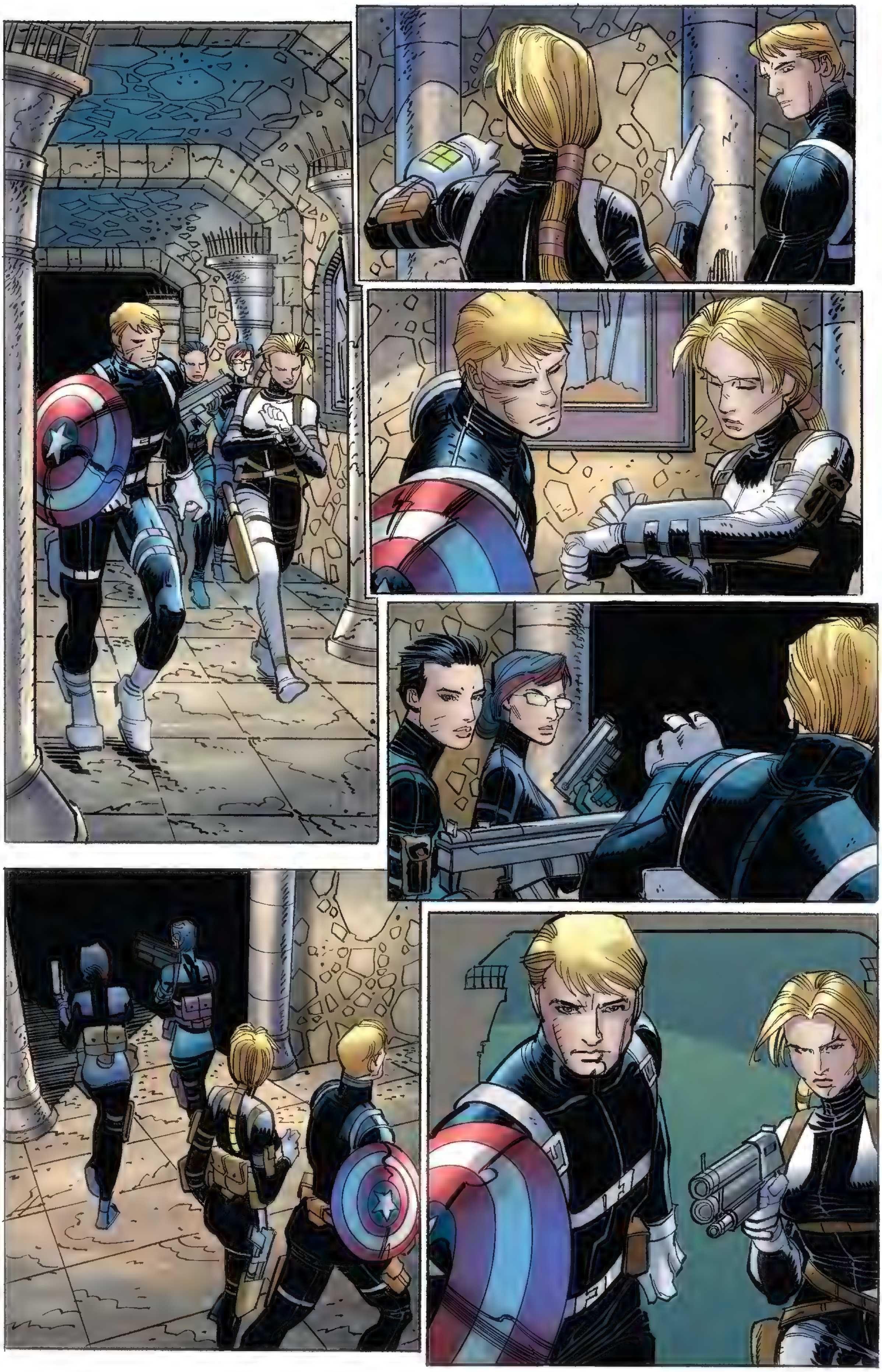

THE QUINCARRIER.
MOBILE HEADQUARTERS OF STEVE ROGERS' ELITE SECRET AVENGERS TEAM.
PRESENT LOCATION: 1000 FEET OVER LANGLEY, VIRGINIA.

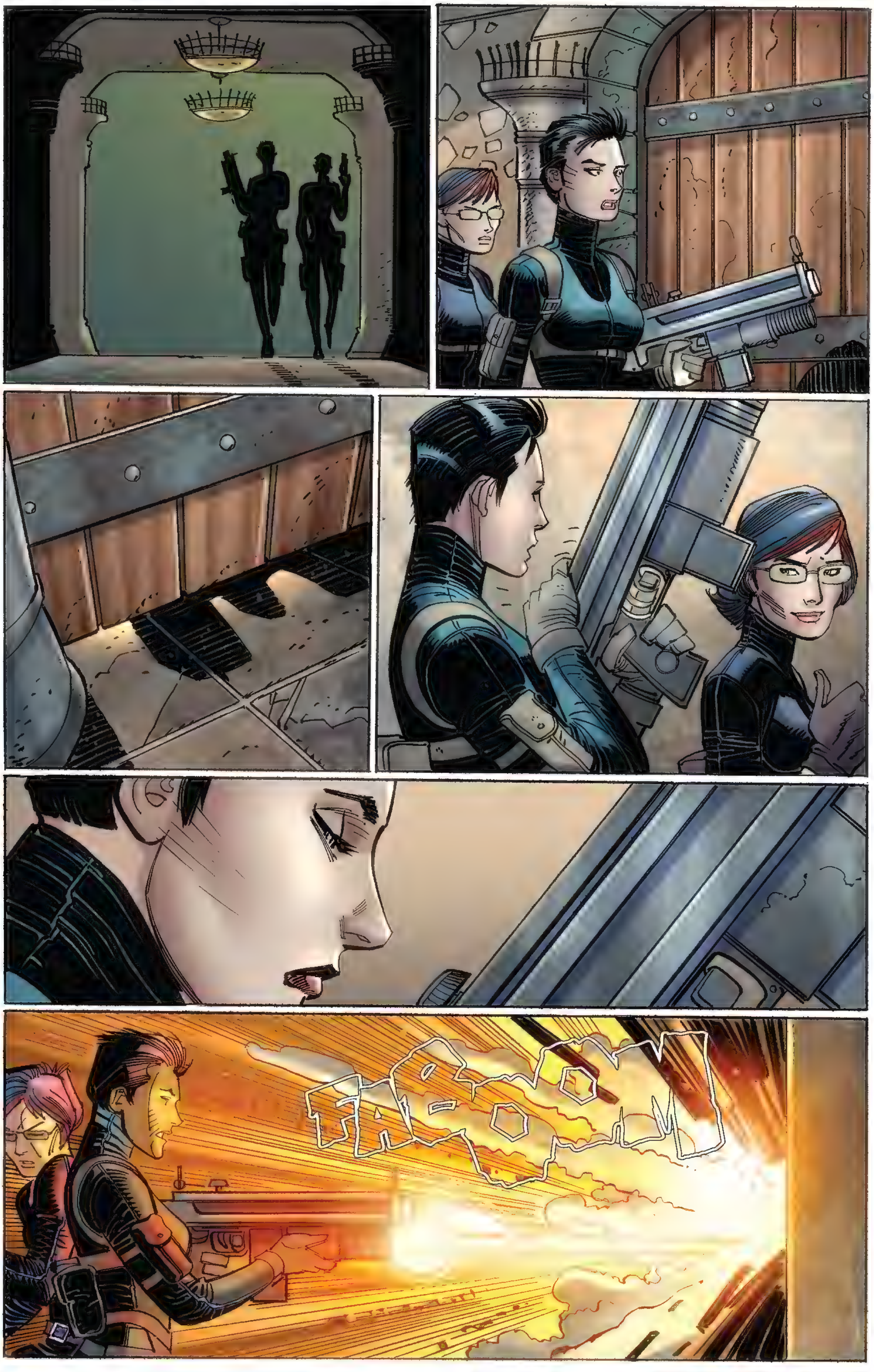

COMMANDER ROGERS?
COMMANDER ROGERS?
STEVE?
I THINK WE FOUND SOMETHING.
SHOW ME.

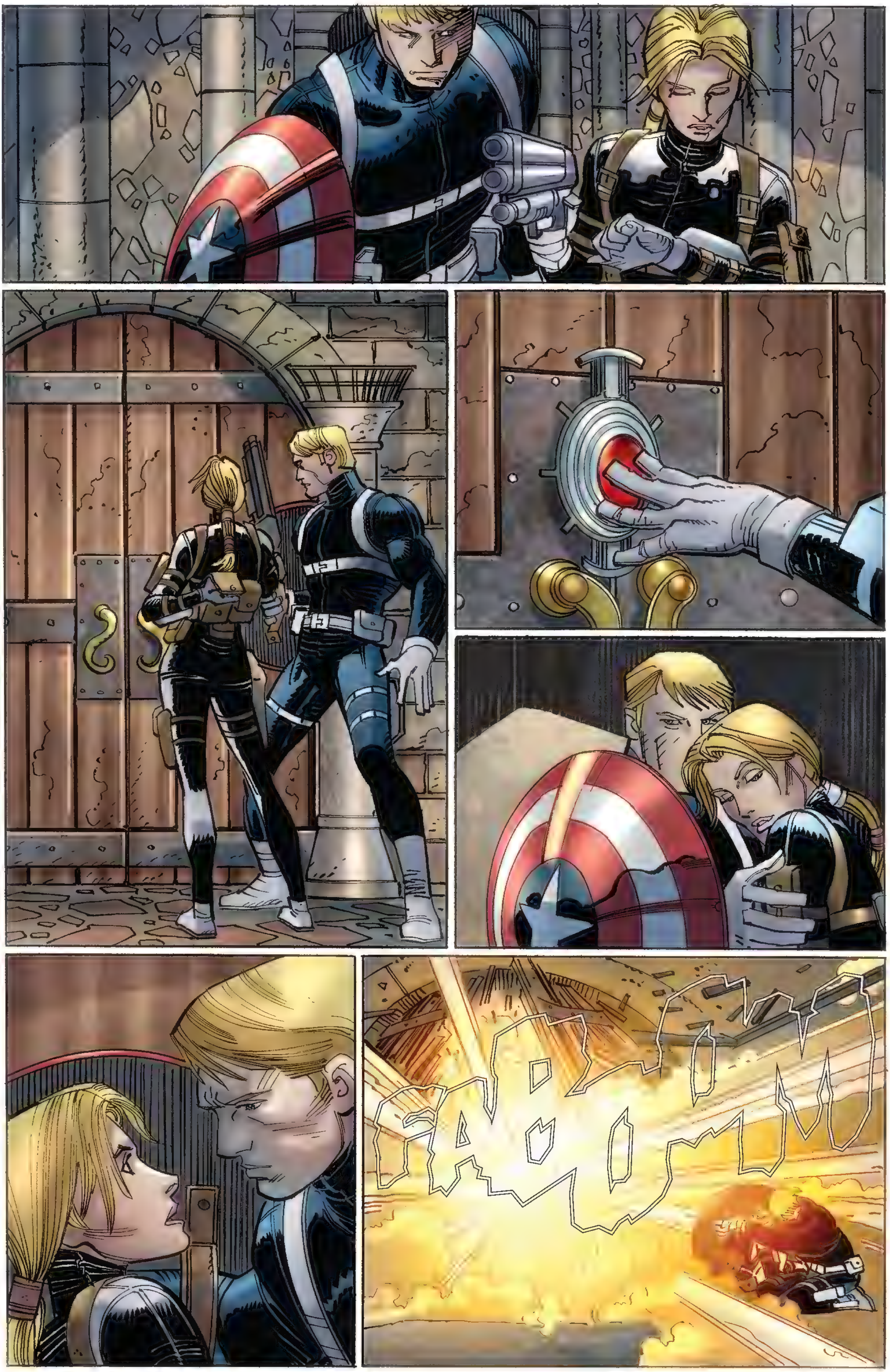

IT IS PART OF OUR DAILY OPERATIONS TO SEEK OUT ANY AND ALL CHATTER INDICATING INFORMATION ON THE WHEREABOUTS AND ACTIONS OF ANY OF THE TOP POTENTIAL INTERNATIONAL THREATS.
THIS INCLUDES DR. DOOM, OBVIOUSLY, THE RED SKULL, ANYTHING GOING ON WITH HYDRA, A.I.M., H.A.M.M.E.R....
THE RED SKULL'S DAUGHTER, EVEN BEFORE SHE LET LOOSE LIKE THIS, WAS A CONCERN.
BUT SIN, AS SHE IS CALLING HERSELF, WAS A RECENT ADDITION TO THE TOP OF THE LIST.
SO IT'S NOT LIKE WE WEREN'T TRYING TO FIND HER *BEFORE* THIS HAPPENED.
WE ABSOLUTELY WERE.
IT'S JUST VERY *HARD* TO GET AN ANGLE ON PEOPLE LIKE HER.
THERE IS NO RHYME OR REASON. THERE IS NO METHOD TO HER KIND OF MADNESS.
IT'S LIKE TRYING TO CATCH A HURRICANE IN A BASEBALL MITT.
BUT ONCE THIS "EVENT" HAPPENED, OBVIOUSLY, WE POOLED ALL OF OUR INTELLIGENCE RESOURCES--
ANYTHING THAT WAS AVAILABLE.
IT WAS ALL ABOUT TRYING TO FIND WHERE THIS LITTLE RED SKULL GIRL WAS.
NO MATTER HOW CLEVER SHE THINKS SHE'S BEING... SHE JUST PUT A DAMN BIG TARGET ON HER HEAD.
AND AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, ALL WE NEEDED TO DO TO STOP THIS MADNESS WAS TO *CUT IT OFF.*
USUALLY THE VOICE OF REASON AGAINST THAT KIND OF THINKING WOULD BE STEVE ROGERS.
THAT'S WHY HE WAS IN CHARGE.
BUT ONCE THAT IDIOT WENT AND WHACKED BUCKY BARNES...
SHE MIGHT AS WELL HAVE PUT ON A SIGN THAT SAID:
STEVE ROGERS, COME AND GET ME.


AGENT 13, SHARON CARTER, FOUND SOME FIRM INTEL THAT THE RED SKULL WAS HOLED UP IN A SWEDISH CASTLE.
STEVE ROGERS IMMEDIATELY SPRANG INTO ACTION.
OBVIOUSLY, HE WAS GOING TO TAKE POINT ON THIS ONE.
I ASKED HIM:
WHICH AVENGERS SHOULD I PULL IN FROM THE FIELD?
HE SAID: NONE OF THEM.
WHICH, I WON'T LIE TO YOU, SURPRISED THE HELL OUT OF ME.
BUT HE SAID: IF WE RETREAT ANYONE, EVEN THE AGENTS OF ATLAS, THE RED SKULL WILL KNOW SOMETHING IS UP.
SHE'LL KNOW THERE'S BEEN A CHANGE OF PLANS.
HE WAS RIGHT.
BUT...
WHO WOULD RUN THE MISSION?
MAYBE THE *MOST IMPORTANT* MISSION.
ALL THE HEAVY HITTERS ARE IN THE FIELD.
I MEAN *ALL* OF THEM.
I SUGGESTED AN AIR STRIKE ON THE ENTIRE SEABOARD.
HE SAID NO.
BUT I KNEW HE WOULD.
HE TOLD ME TO SUIT UP.
ME, AGENT 13, AND TO MY SURPRISE, VICTORIA HAND. THE LIAISON TO THE NEW AVENGERS.
TRUST ISSUES WITH HER ASIDE...
I SAID: SHE'S A GLORIFIED ACCOUNTANT.
HE SAID: SHE'S A TRAINED AGENT OF S.H.I.E.L.D.
I SAID: YEAH, FROM THE ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT.
BUT IT'S NOT MY CALL.
I HEARD SOMEONE ON DECK SNICKER: STEVE ROGERS AND HIS AVENGING ANGELS.
THAT GUY KISSED HIS CAREER GOODBYE.

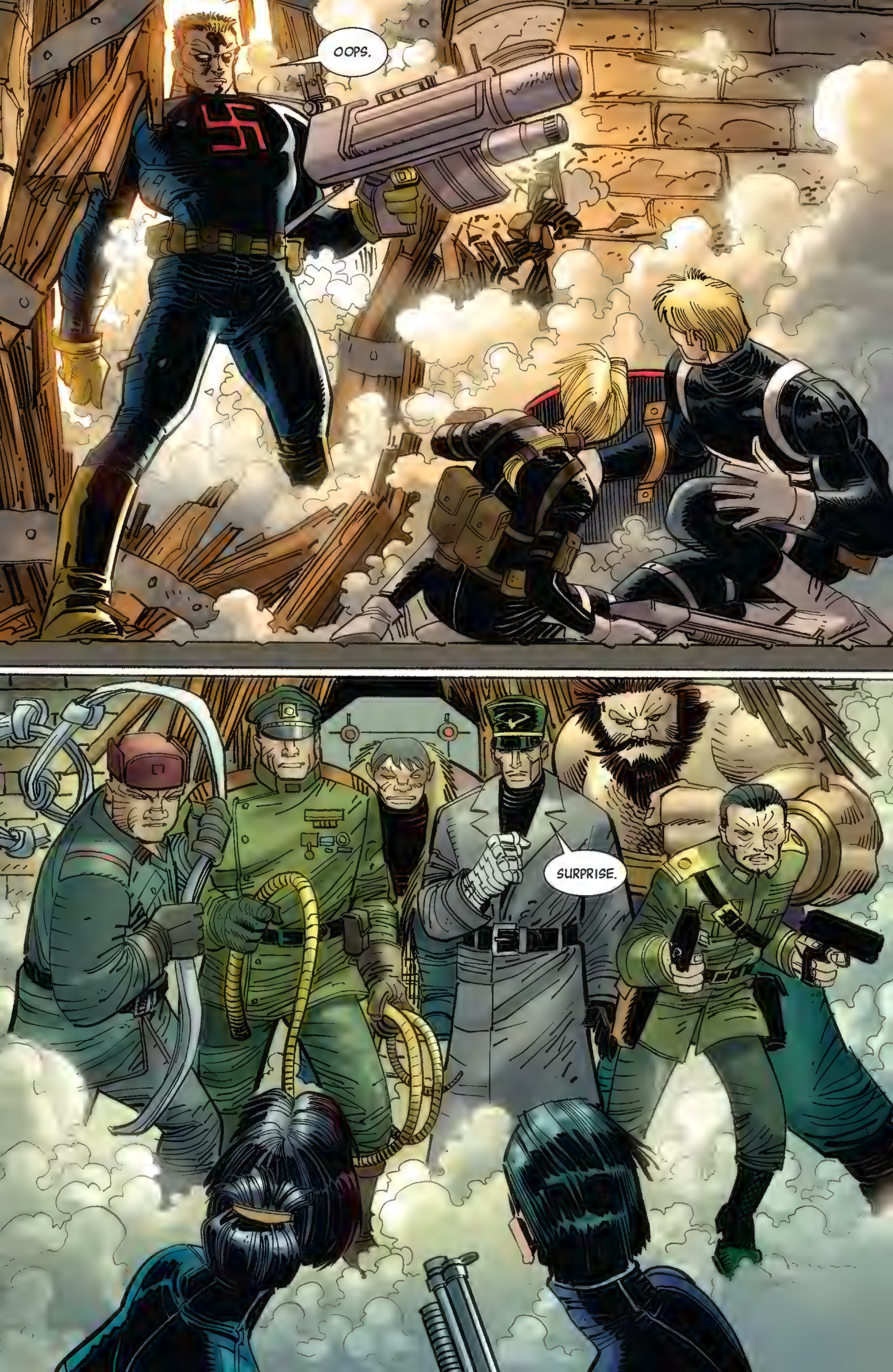

HELSINGBORG, SWEDEN.

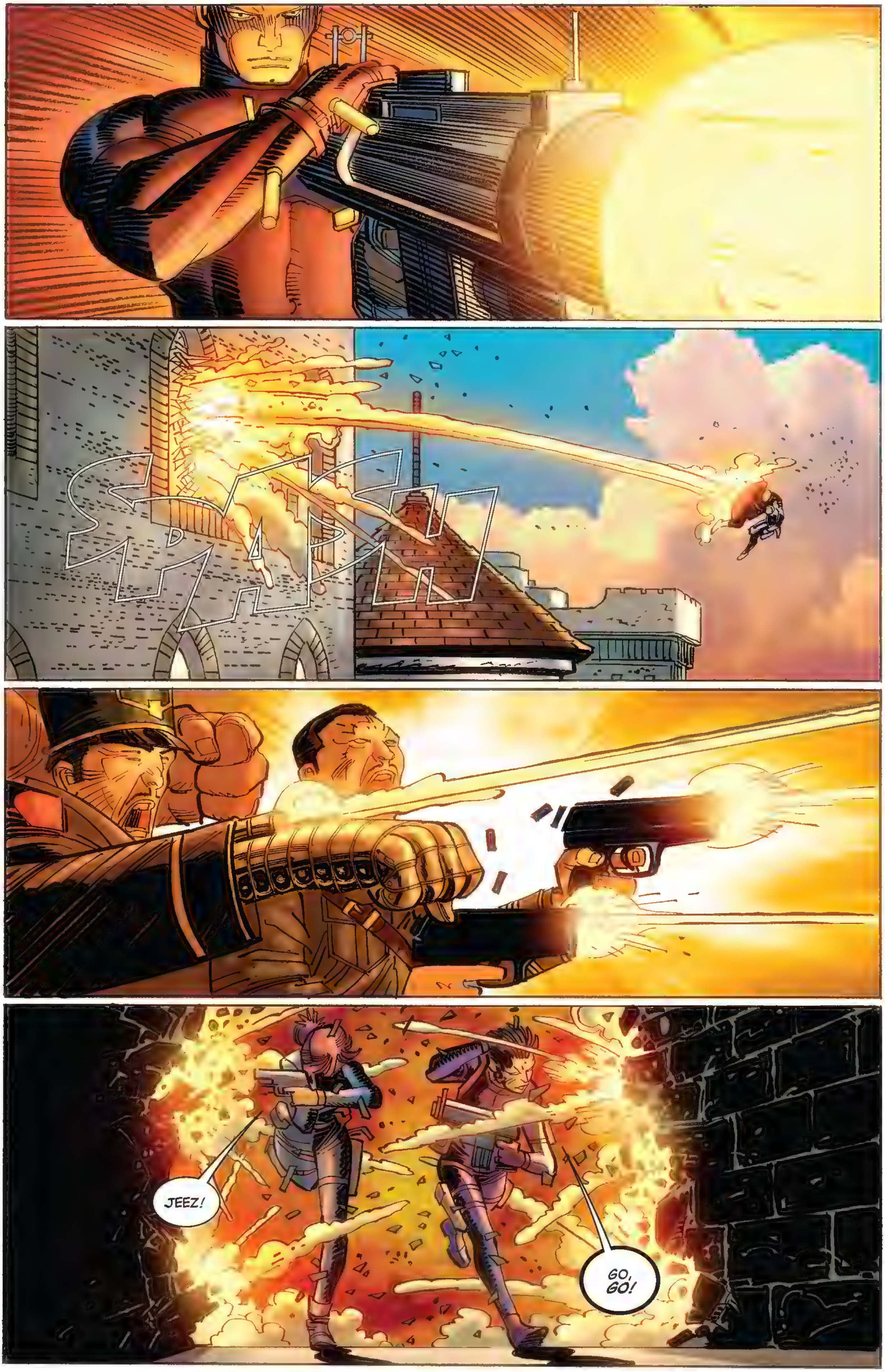


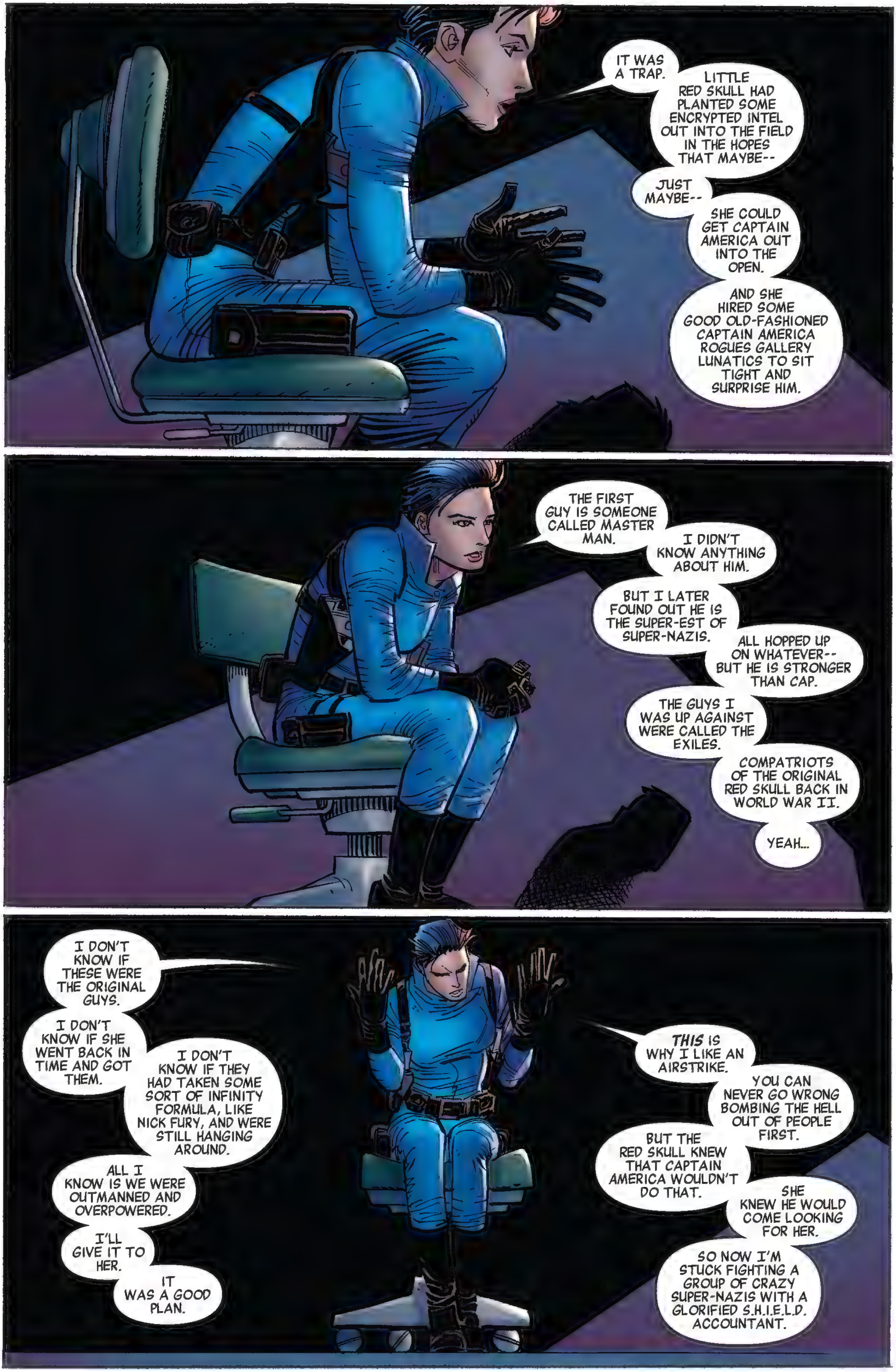

FA-BOOM

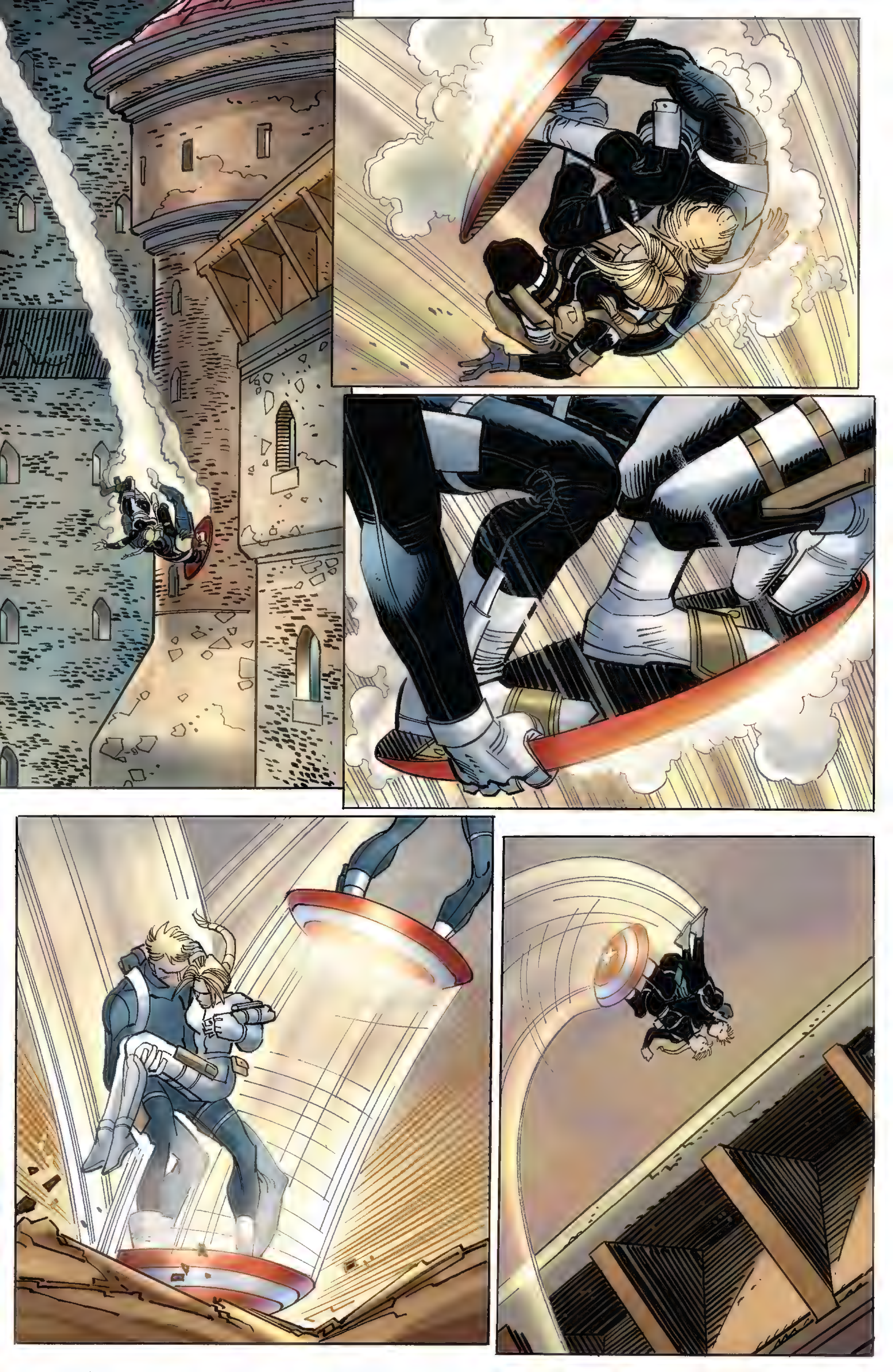


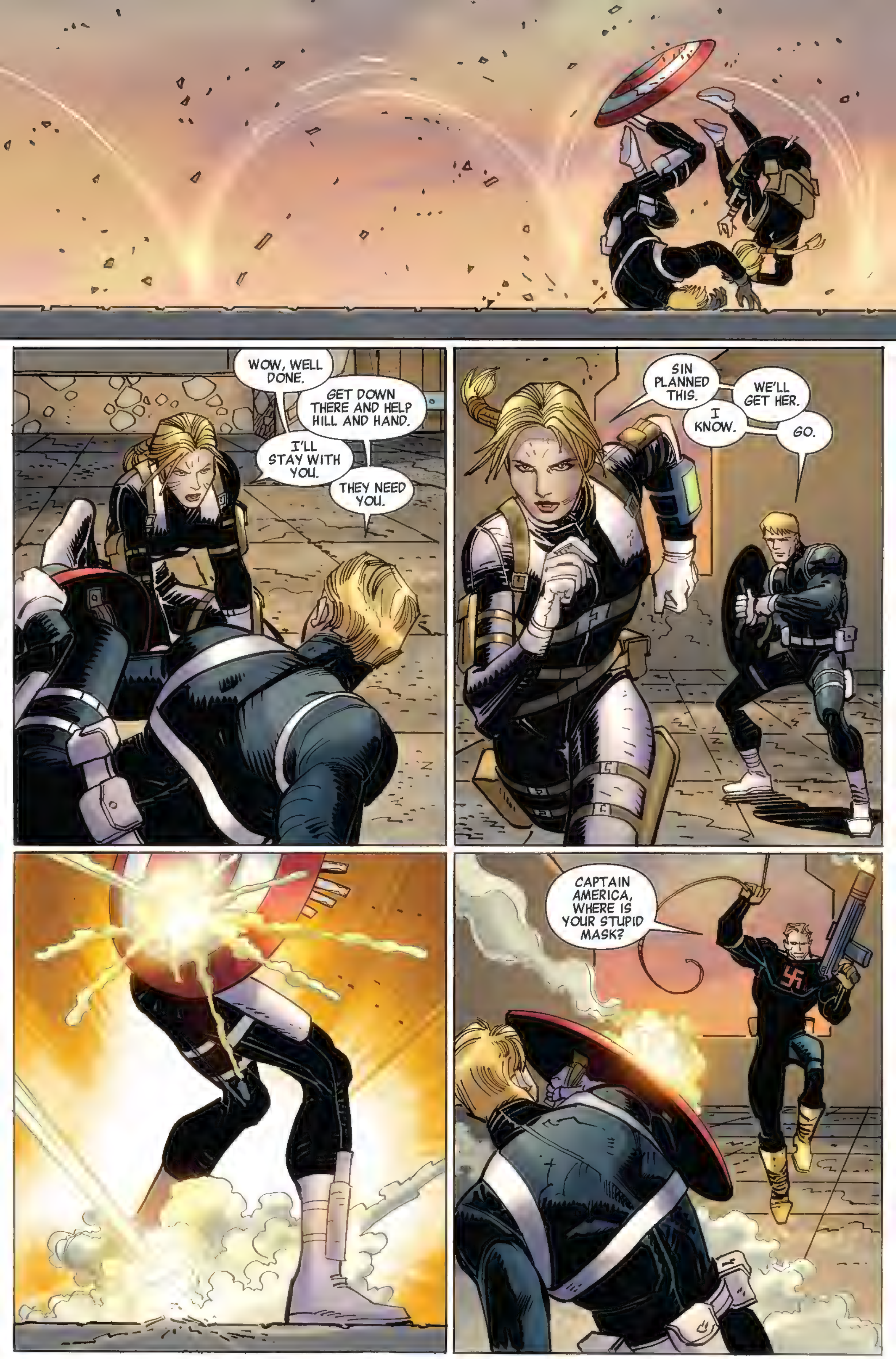
FADOOM

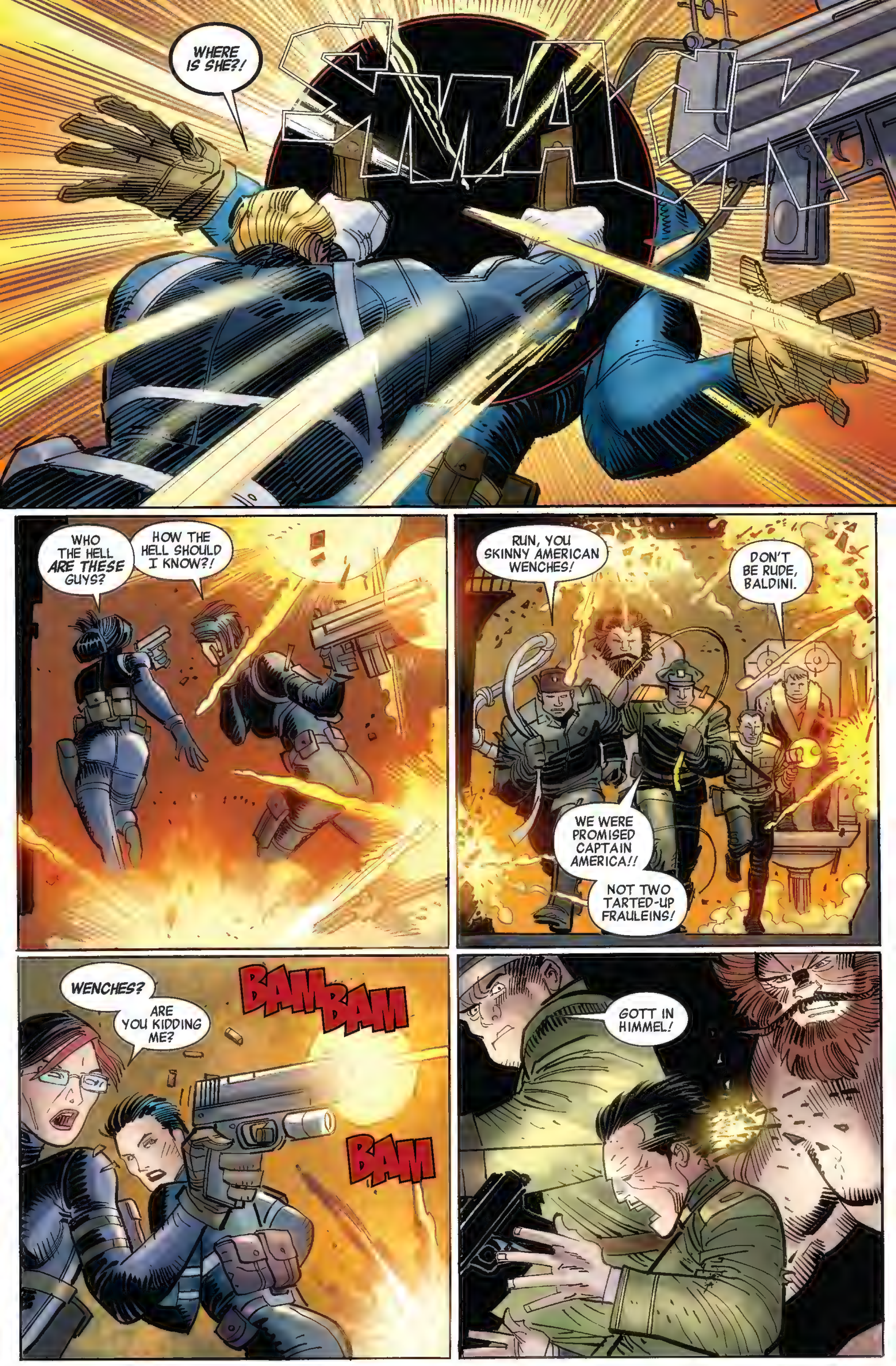

OOPS.
SURPRISE.

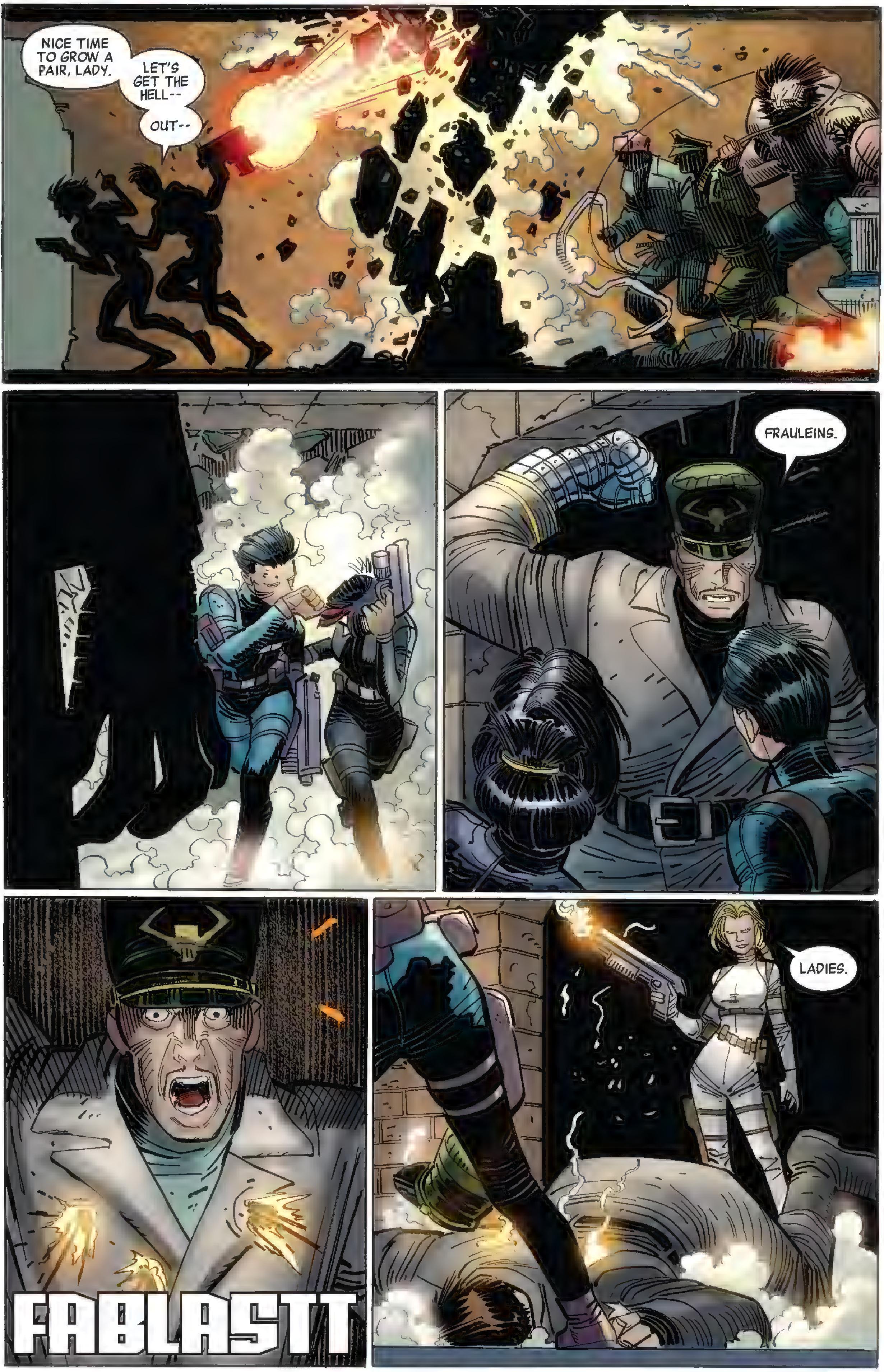

SPLASH
JEEZ!
GO, GO!

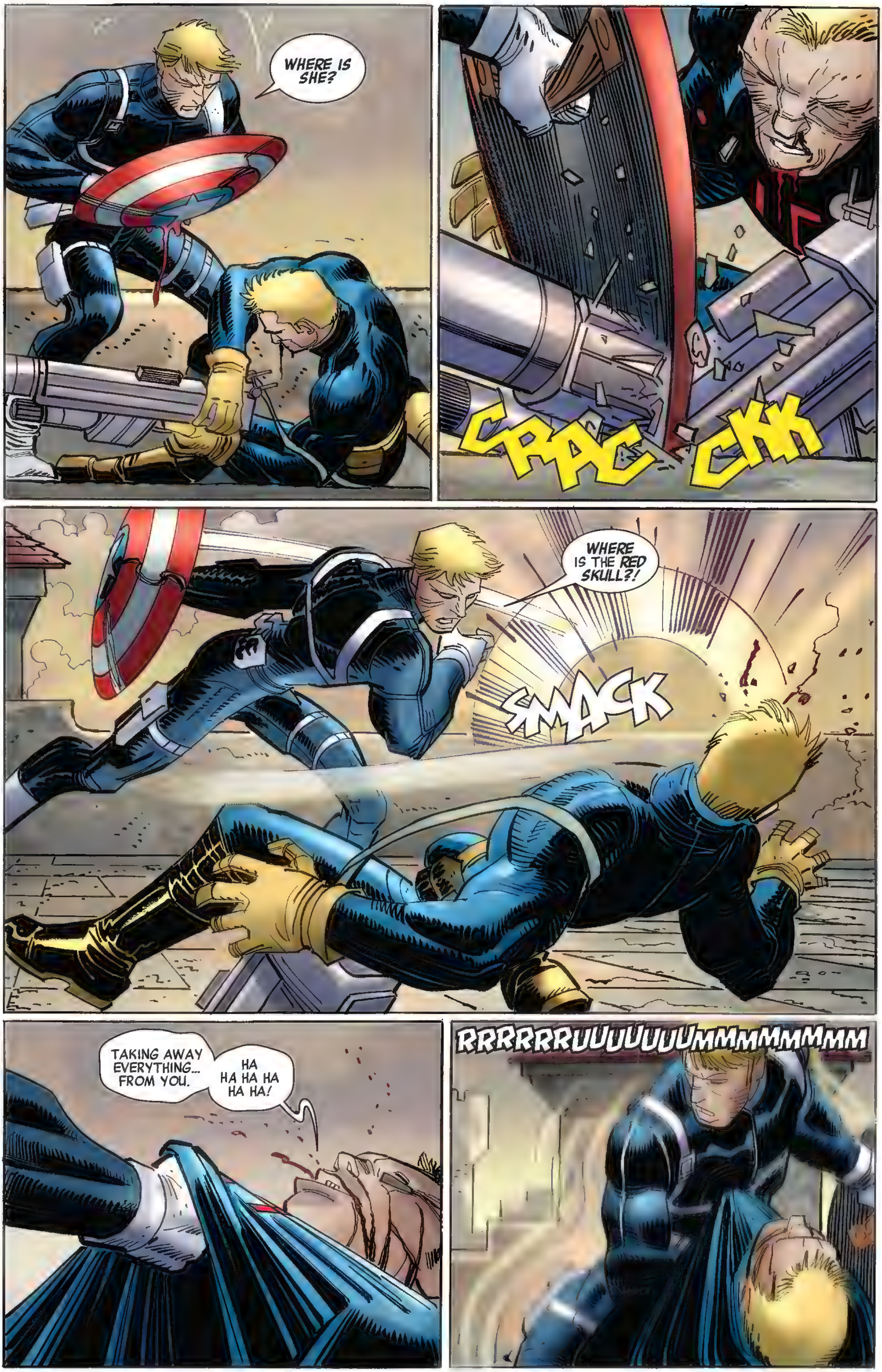

IT WAS A TRAP.
LITTLE RED SKULL HAD PLANTED SOME ENCRYPTED INTEL OUT INTO THE FIELD IN THE HOPES THAT MAYBE--
JUST MAYBE--
SHE COULD GET CAPTAIN AMERICA OUT INTO THE OPEN.
AND SHE HIRED SOME GOOD OLD-FASHIONED CAPTAIN AMERICA ROGUES GALLERY LUNATICS TO SIT TIGHT AND SURPRISE HIM.
THE FIRST GUY IS SOMEONE CALLED MASTER MAN.
I DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT HIM.
BUT I LATER FOUND OUT HE IS THE SUPER-EST OF SUPER-NAZIS.
ALL HOPPED UP ON WHATEVER-- BUT HE IS STRONGER THAN CAP.
THE GUYS I WAS UP AGAINST WERE CALLED THE EXILES.
COMPATRIOTS OF THE ORIGINAL RED SKULL BACK IN WORLD WAR II.
YEAH...
I DON'T KNOW IF THESE WERE THE ORIGINAL GUYS.
I DON'T KNOW IF SHE WENT BACK IN TIME AND GOT THEM.
I DON'T KNOW IF THEY HAD TAKEN SOME SORT OF INFINITY FORMULA, LIKE NICK FURY, AND WERE STILL HANGING AROUND.
ALL I KNOW IS WE WERE OUTMANNED AND OVERPOWERED.
I'LL GIVE IT TO HER.
IT WAS A GOOD PLAN.
THIS IS WHY I LIKE AN AIRSTRIKE.
YOU CAN NEVER GO WRONG BOMBING THE HELL OUT OF PEOPLE FIRST.
BUT THE RED SKULL KNEW THAT CAPTAIN AMERICA WOULDN'T DO THAT.
SHE KNEW HE WOULD COME LOOKING FOR HER.
SO NOW I'M STUCK FIGHTING A GROUP OF CRAZY SUPER-NAZIS WITH A GLORIFIED S.H.I.E.L.D. ACCOUNTANT.

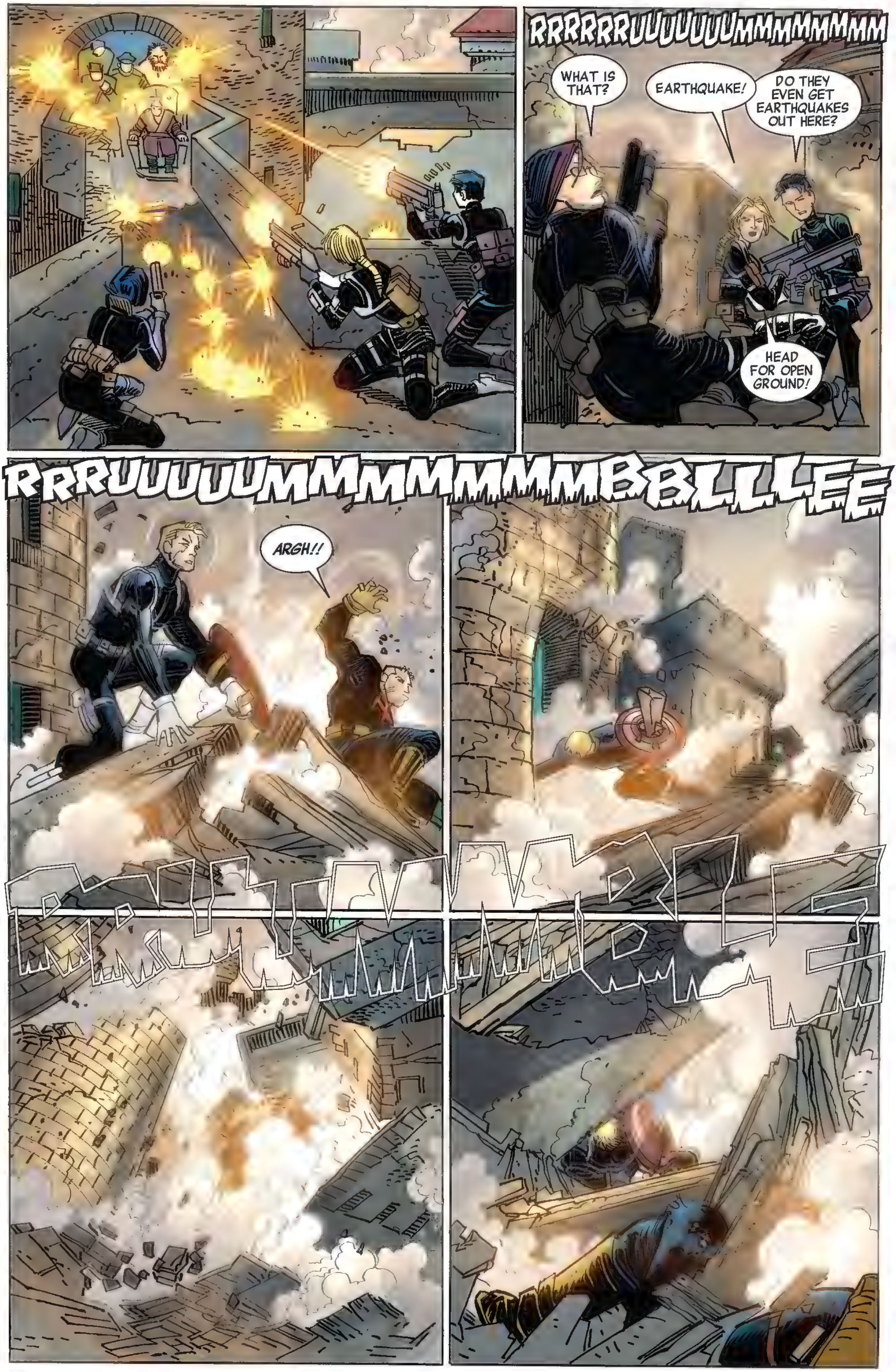


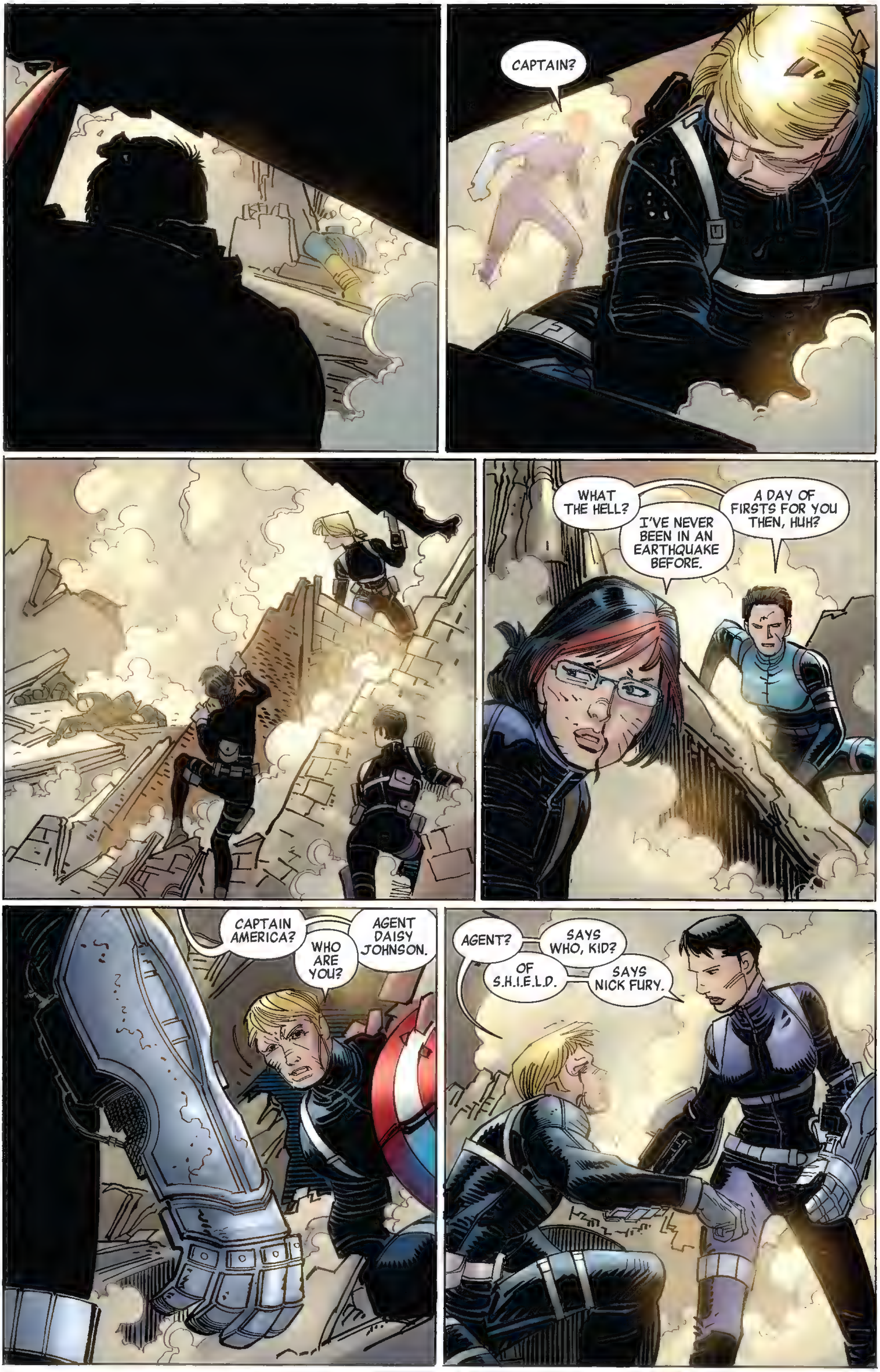

WOW, WELL DONE.
GET DOWN THERE AND HELP HILL AND HAND.
I'LL STAY WITH YOU.
THEY NEED YOU.
SIN PLANNED THIS.
WE'LL GET HER.
I KNOW.
GO.
CAPTAIN AMERICA, WHERE IS YOUR STUPID MASK?

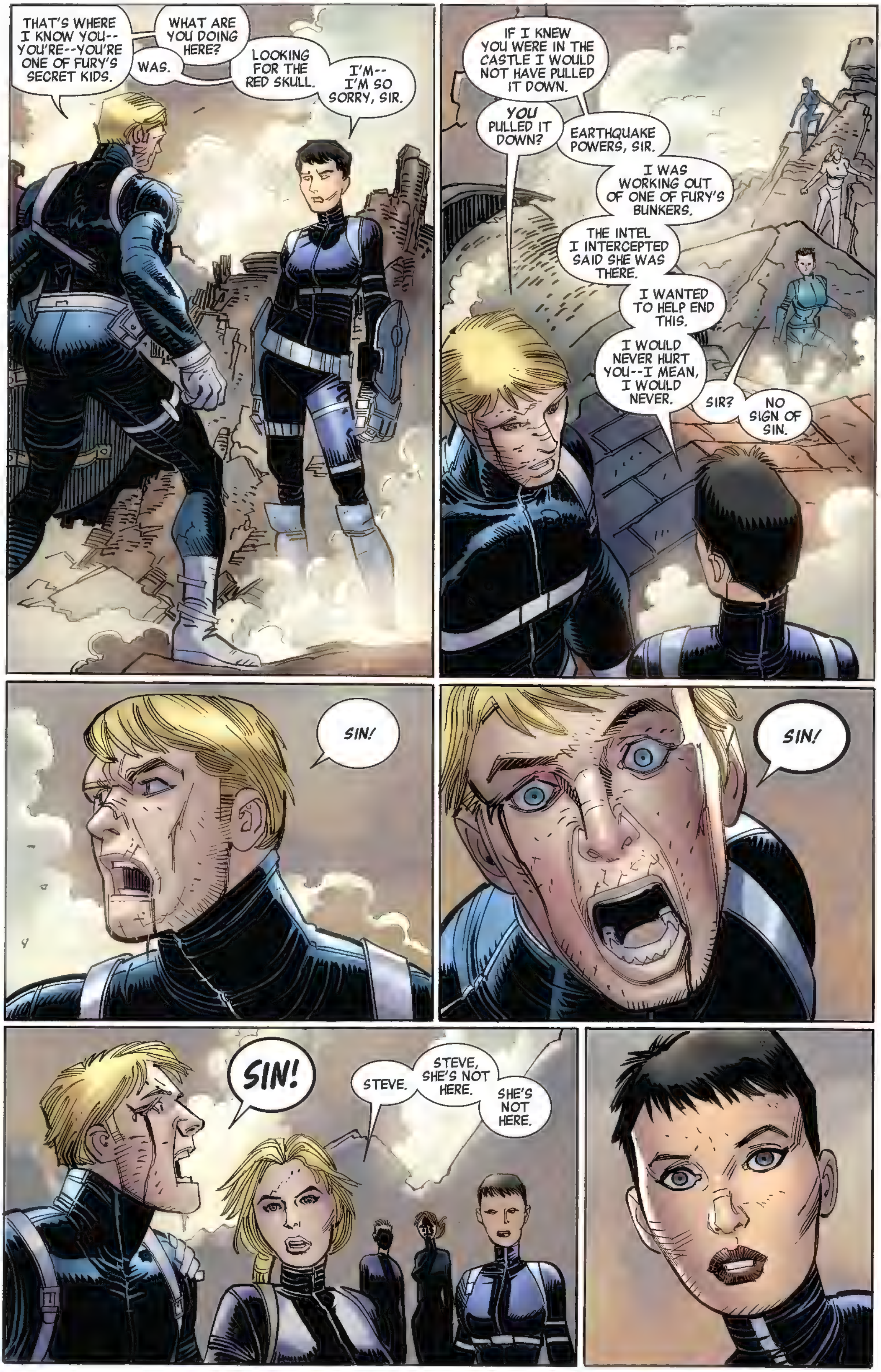

WHERE IS SHE?!
SMACK
WHO THE HELL *ARE THESE* GUYS?
HOW THE HELL SHOULD I KNOW?!
RUN, YOU SKINNY AMERICAN WENCHES!
DON'T BE RUDE, BALDINI.
WE WERE PROMISED CAPTAIN AMERICA!!
NOT TWO TARTED-UP FRAULEINS!
WENCHES?
ARE YOU KIDDING ME?
BAM BAM
BAM
GOTT IN HIMMEL!

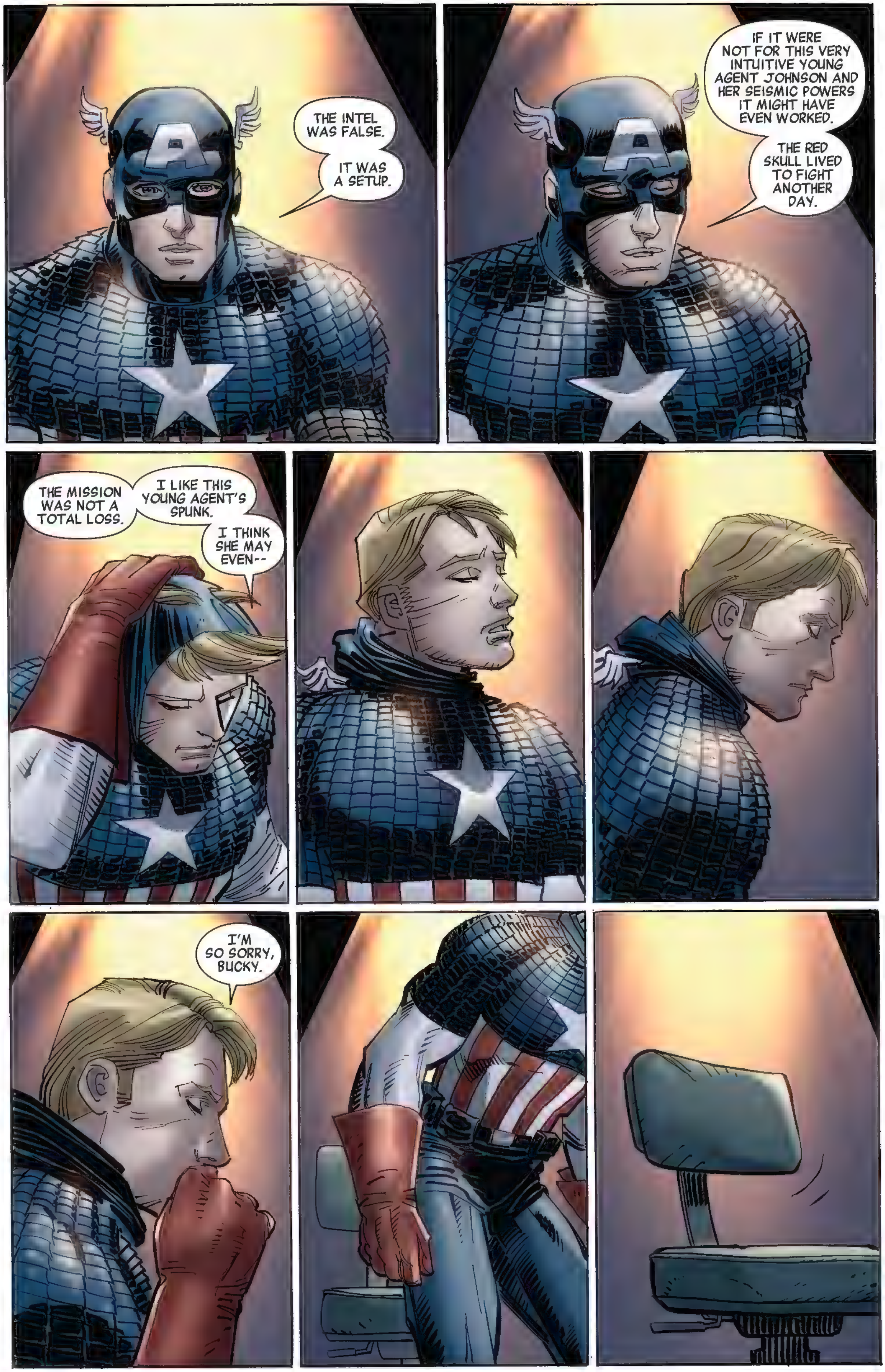

NICE TIME TO GROW A PAIR, LADY.
LET'S GET THE HELL--
OUT--
FRAULEINS.
FABLASTT
LADIES.

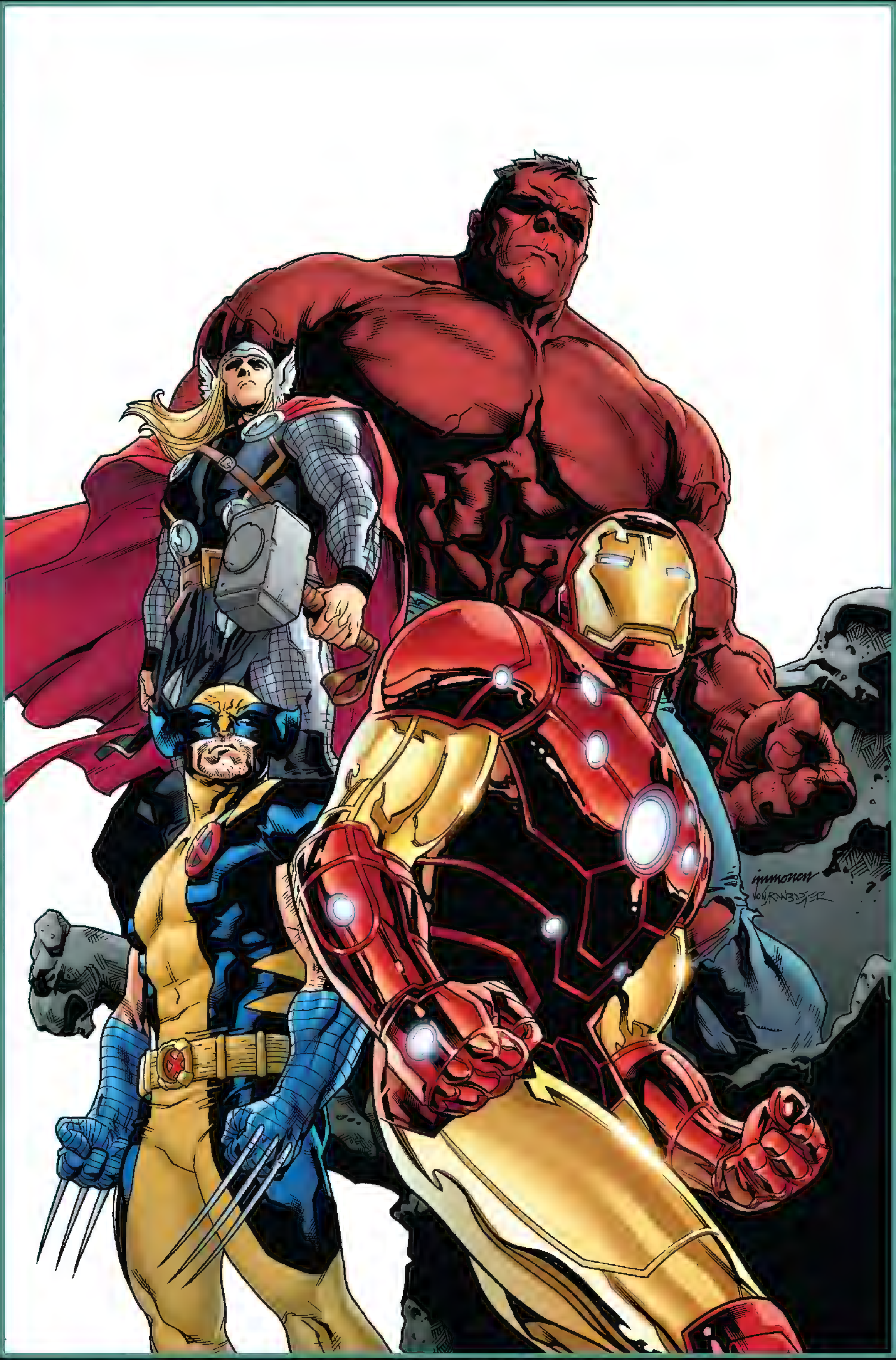

WHERE IS SHE?
CRAC CKK
WHERE IS THE RED SKULL?!
SMACK
TAKING AWAY EVERYTHING... FROM YOU.
HA HA HA HA HA HA!
RRRRRRUUUUUUUMMMMMMMM


RRRRRRUUUUUUMMMMMMM
WHAT IS THAT?
EARTHQUAKE!
DO THEY EVEN GET EARTHQUAKES OUT HERE?
HEAD FOR OPEN GROUND!
RRRUUUUUUMMMMMMMMBBLLEE
ARGH!!
RRUUMMBLE


CAPTAIN?
WHAT THE HELL?
I'VE NEVER BEEN IN AN EARTHQUAKE BEFORE.
A DAY OF FIRSTS FOR YOU THEN, HUH?
CAPTAIN AMERICA?
WHO ARE YOU?
AGENT DAISY JOHNSON.
AGENT?
OF S.H.I.E.L.D.
SAYS WHO, KID?
SAYS NICK FURY.

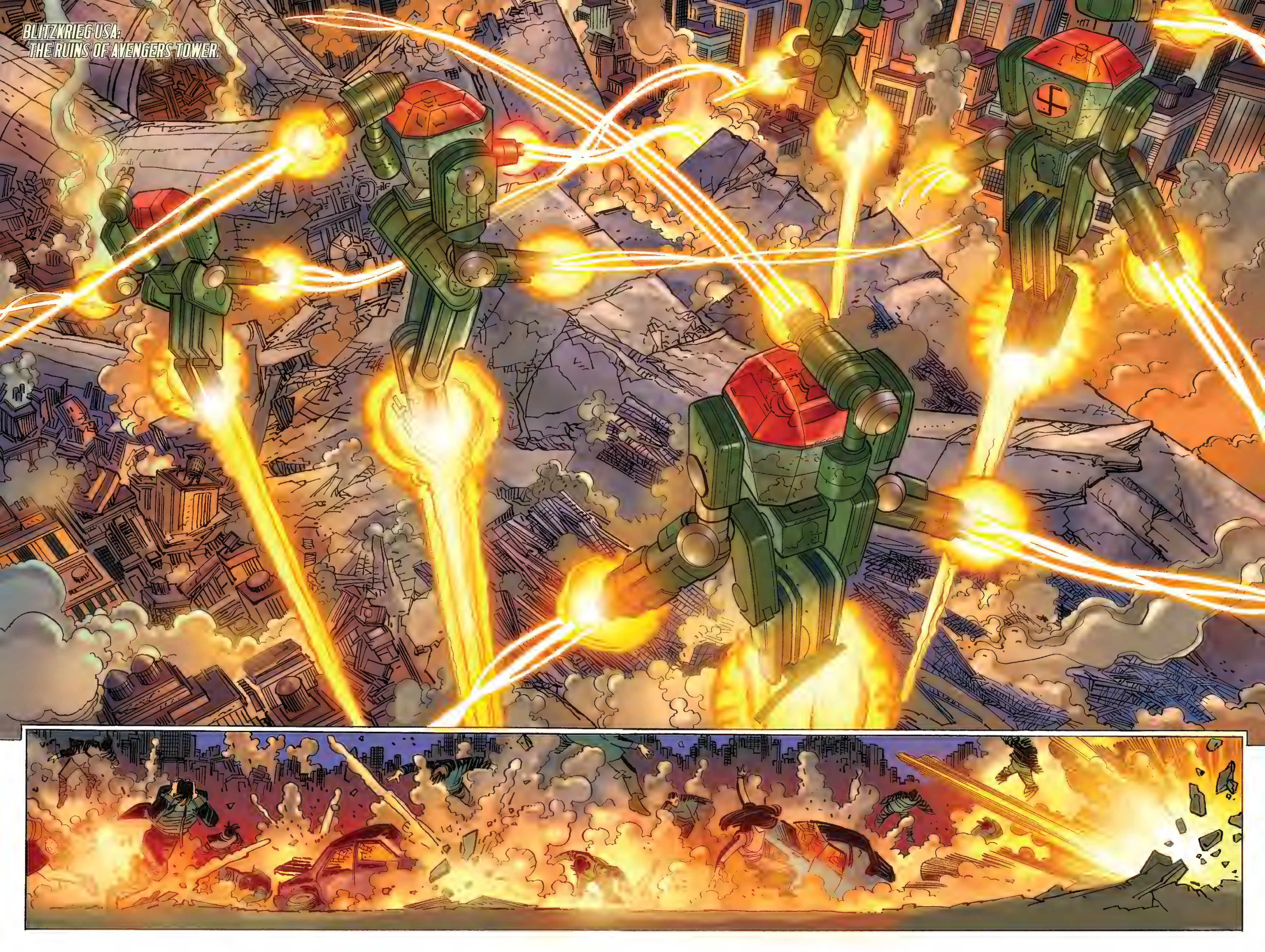

THAT'S WHERE I KNOW YOU-- YOU'RE--YOU'RE ONE OF FURY'S SECRET KIDS.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
WAS.
LOOKING FOR THE RED SKULL.
I'M-- I'M SO SORRY, SIR.
IF I KNEW YOU WERE IN THE CASTLE I WOULD NOT HAVE PULLED IT DOWN.
YOU PULLED IT DOWN?
EARTHQUAKE POWERS, SIR.
I WAS WORKING OUT OF ONE OF FURY'S BUNKERS.
THE INTEL I INTERCEPTED SAID SHE WAS THERE.
I WANTED TO HELP END THIS.
I WOULD NEVER HURT YOU--I MEAN, I WOULD NEVER.
SIR?
NO SIGN OF SIN.
SIN!
SIN!
SIN!
STEVE.
STEVE, SHE'S NOT HERE.
SHE'S NOT HERE.

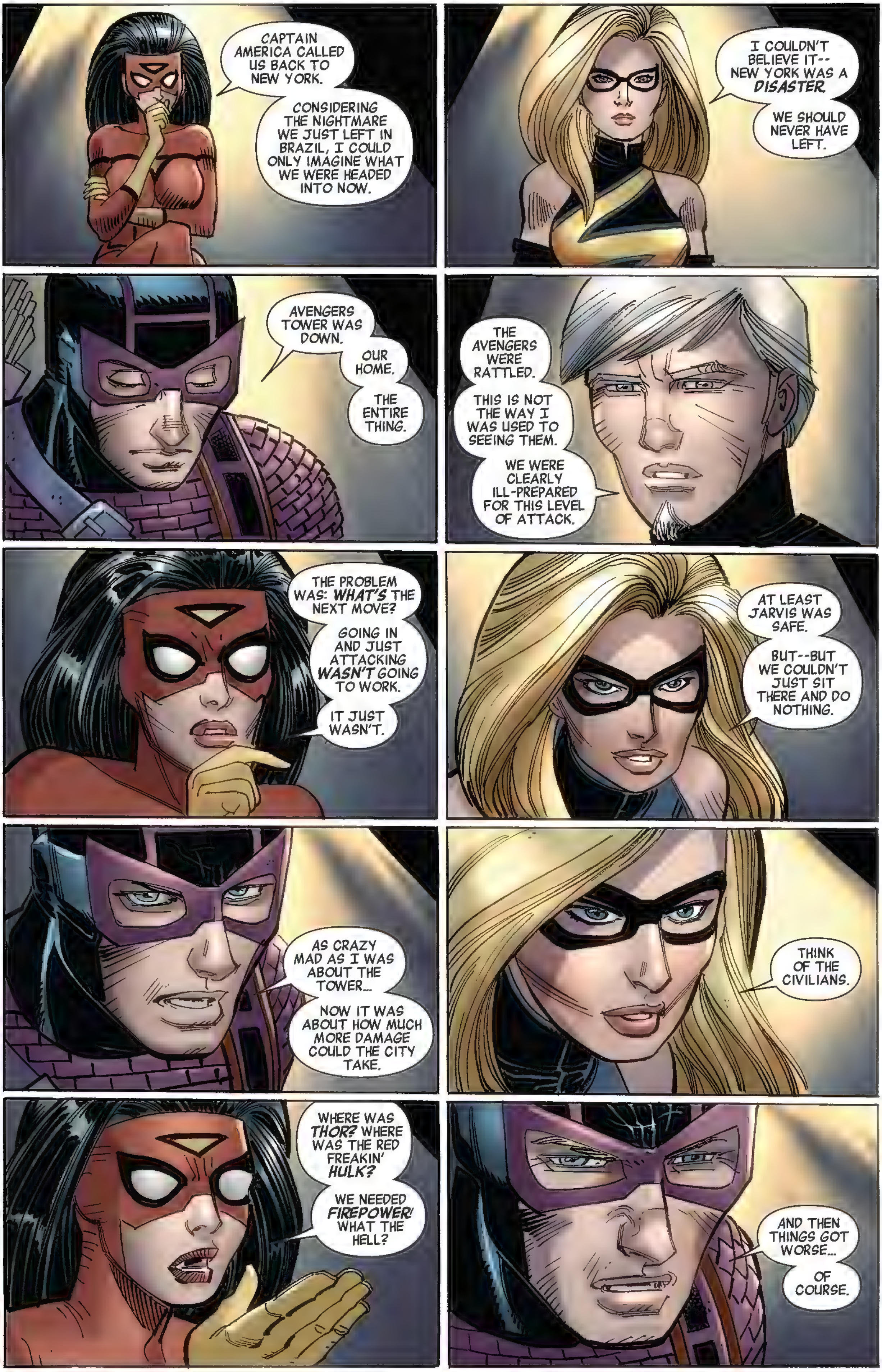

THE INTEL WAS FALSE.
IT WAS A SETUP.
IF IT WERE NOT FOR THIS VERY INTUITIVE YOUNG AGENT JOHNSON AND HER SEISMIC POWERS IT MIGHT HAVE EVEN WORKED.
THE RED SKULL LIVED TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY.
THE MISSION WAS NOT A TOTAL LOSS.
I LIKE THIS YOUNG AGENT'S SPUNK.
I THINK SHE MAY EVEN--
I'M SO SORRY, BUCKY.

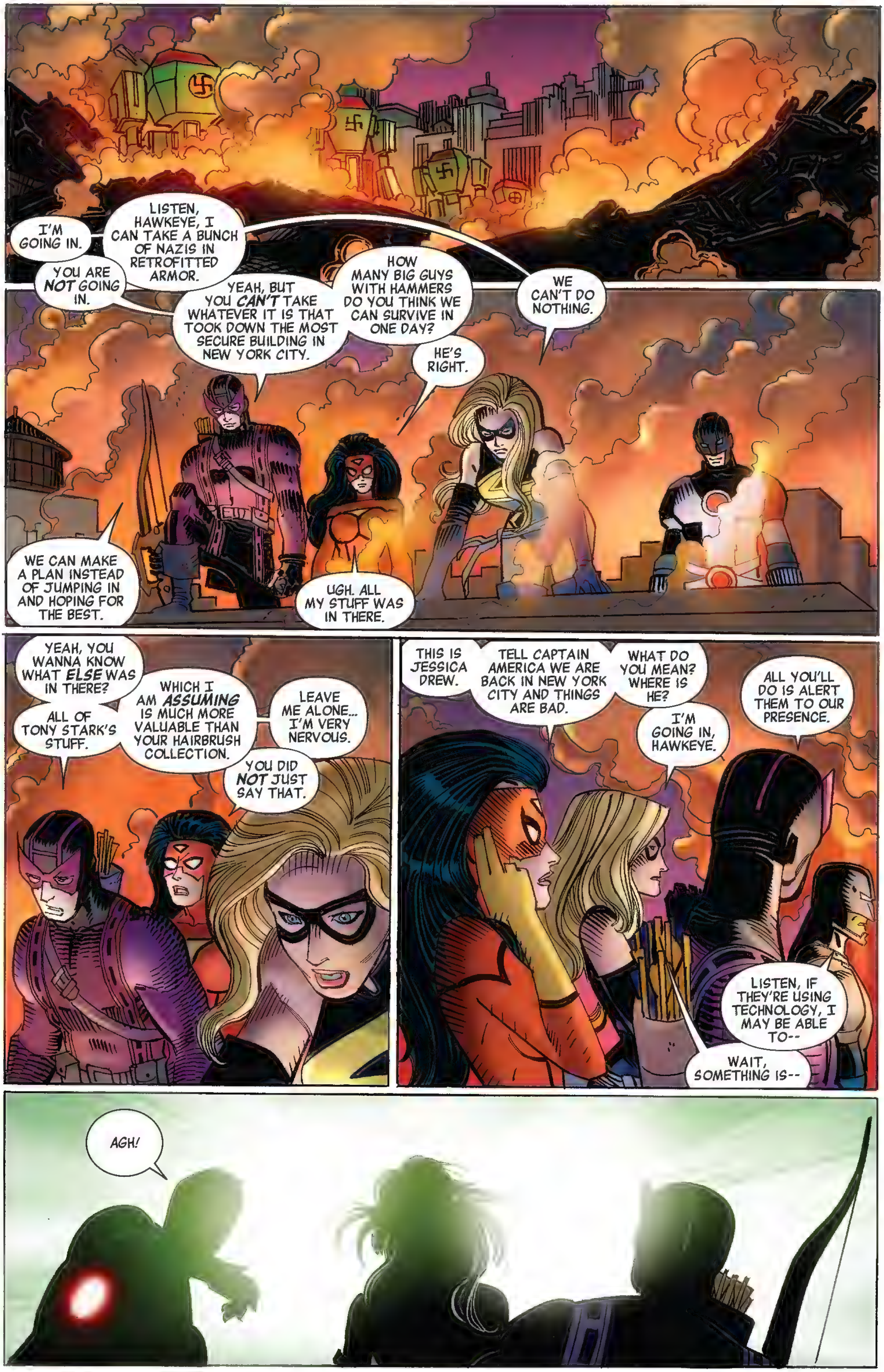


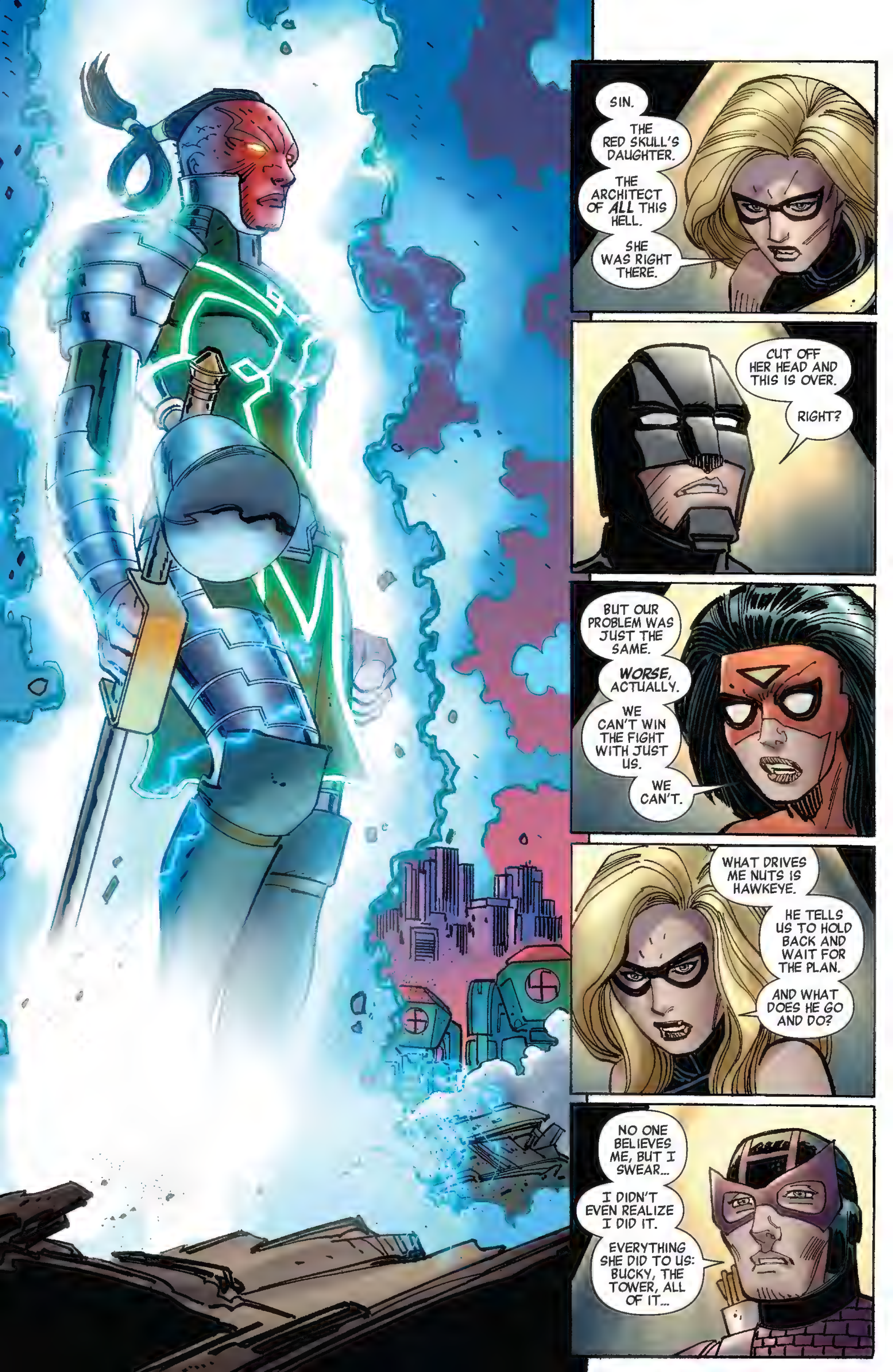
AVENGERS #17 VARIANT BY **STUART IMMONEN,**
WADE VON GRAWBADGER & **LAURA MARTIN**

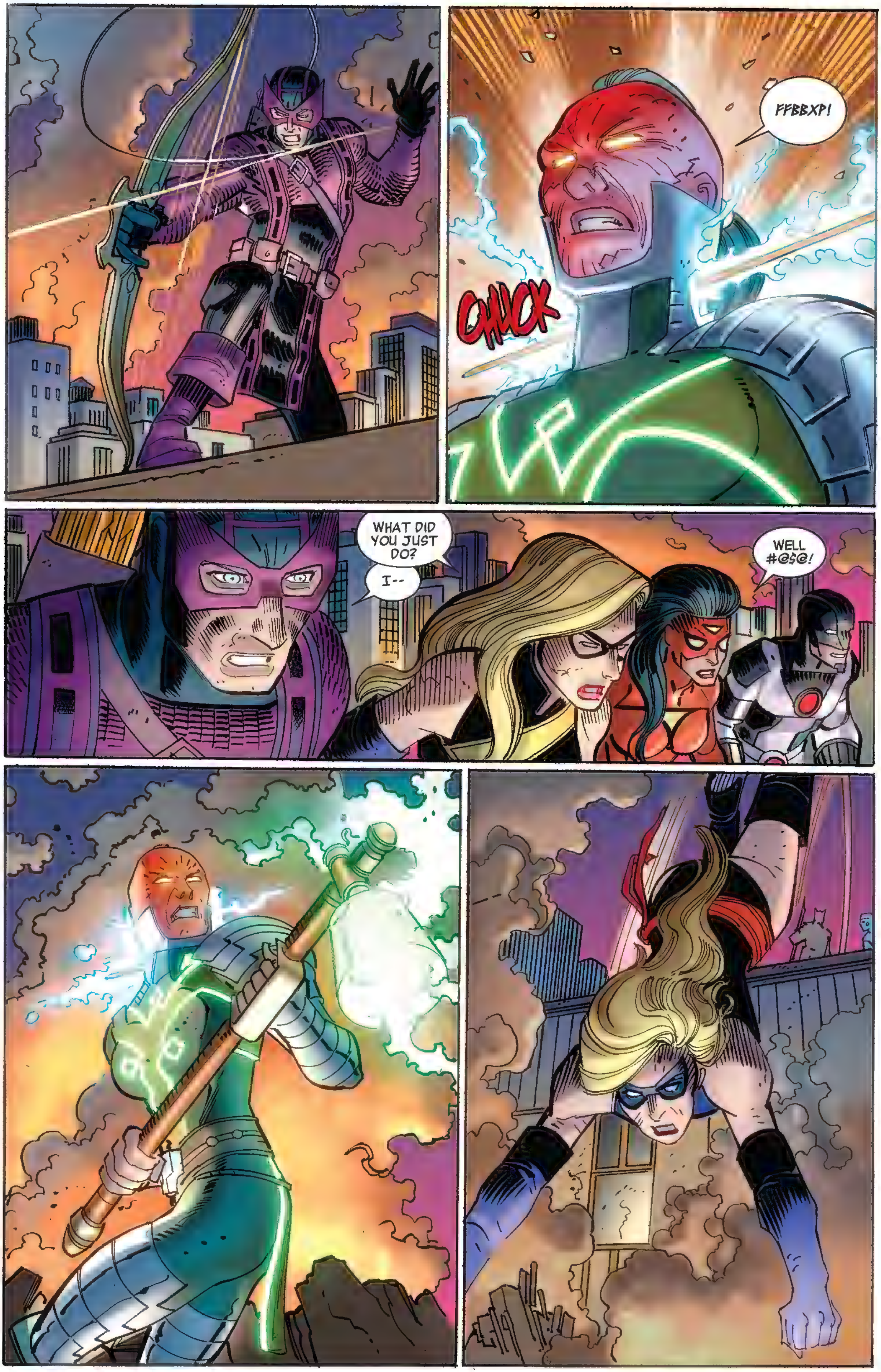
AVENGERS #17

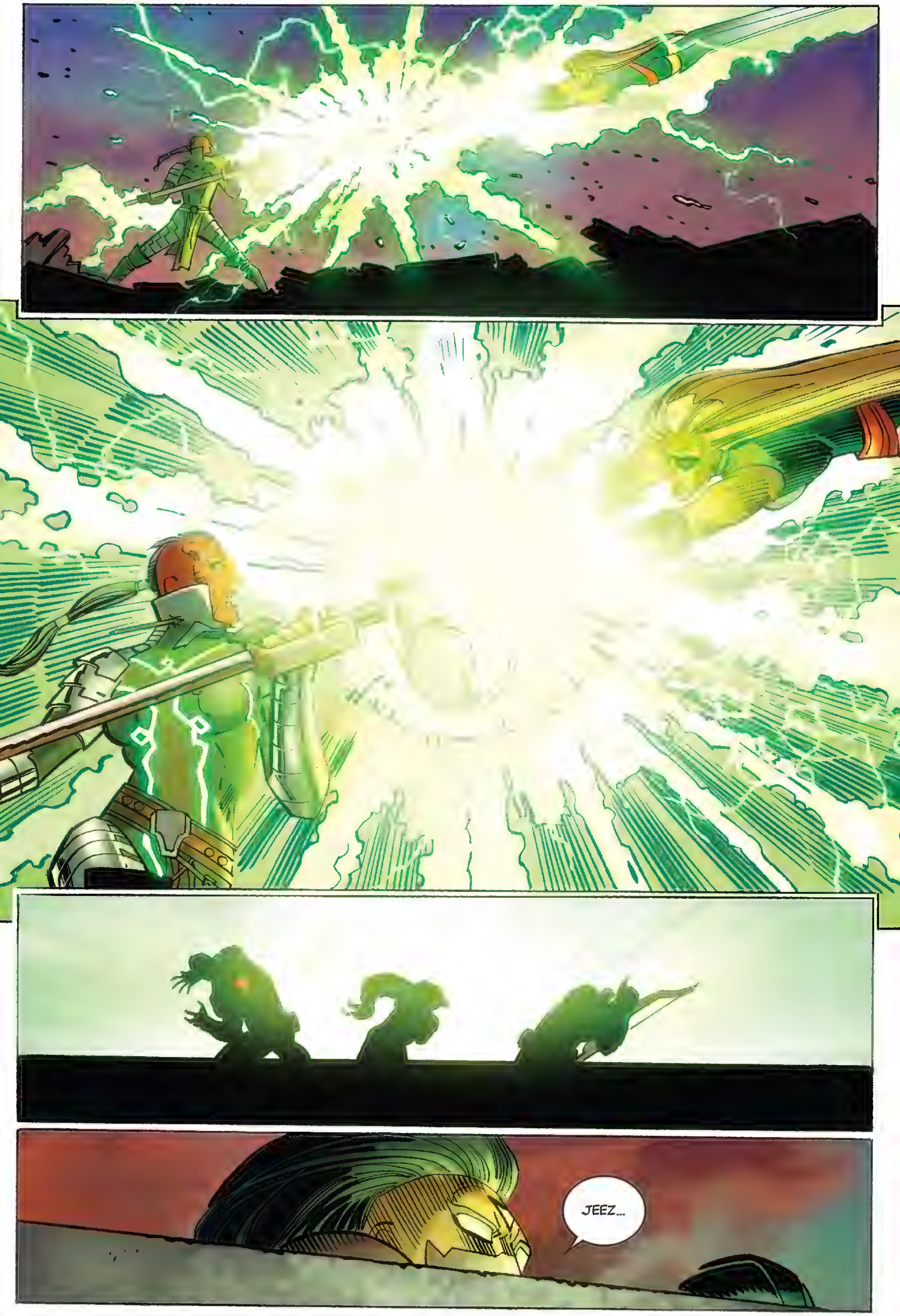

BLITZKRIEG USA:
THE RUINS OF AVENGERS TOWER.

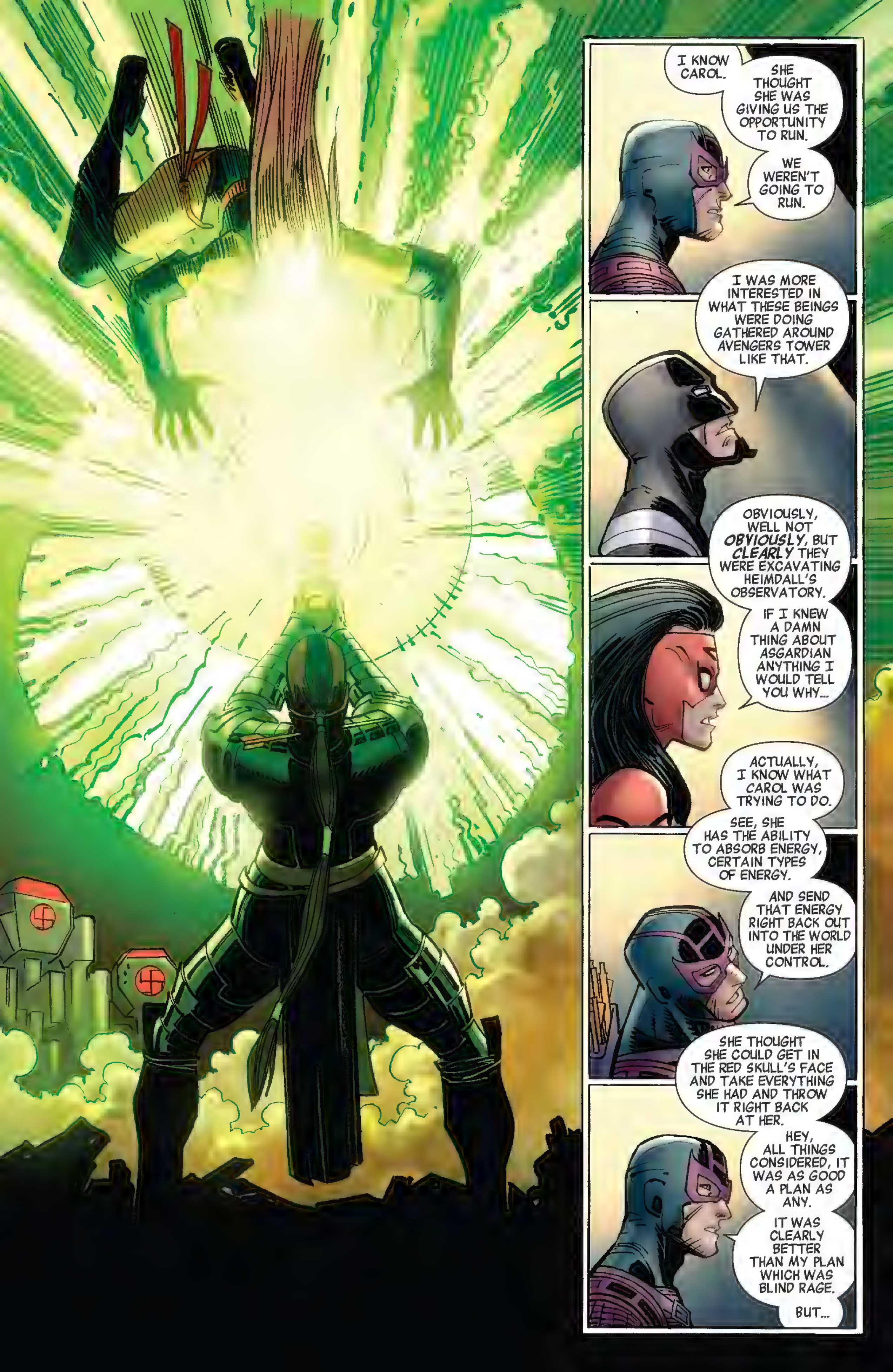

CAPTAIN AMERICA CALLED US BACK TO NEW YORK.
CONSIDERING THE NIGHTMARE WE JUST LEFT IN BRAZIL, I COULD ONLY IMAGINE WHAT WE WERE HEADED INTO NOW.
I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT-- NEW YORK WAS A *DISASTER*.
WE SHOULD NEVER HAVE LEFT.
AVENGERS TOWER WAS DOWN.
OUR HOME.
THE ENTIRE THING.
THE AVENGERS WERE RATTLED.
THIS IS NOT THE WAY I WAS USED TO SEEING THEM.
WE WERE CLEARLY ILL-PREPARED FOR THIS LEVEL OF ATTACK.
THE PROBLEM WAS: *WHAT'S* THE NEXT MOVE?
GOING IN AND JUST ATTACKING *WASN'T* GOING TO WORK.
IT JUST WASN'T.
AT LEAST JARVIS WAS SAFE.
BUT--BUT WE COULDN'T JUST SIT THERE AND DO NOTHING.
AS CRAZY MAD AS I WAS ABOUT THE TOWER...
NOW IT WAS ABOUT HOW MUCH MORE DAMAGE COULD THE CITY TAKE.
THINK OF THE CIVILIANS.
WHERE WAS *THOR?* WHERE WAS THE RED FREAKIN' *HULK?*
WE NEEDED *FIREPOWER!* WHAT THE HELL?
AND THEN THINGS GOT WORSE...
OF COURSE.

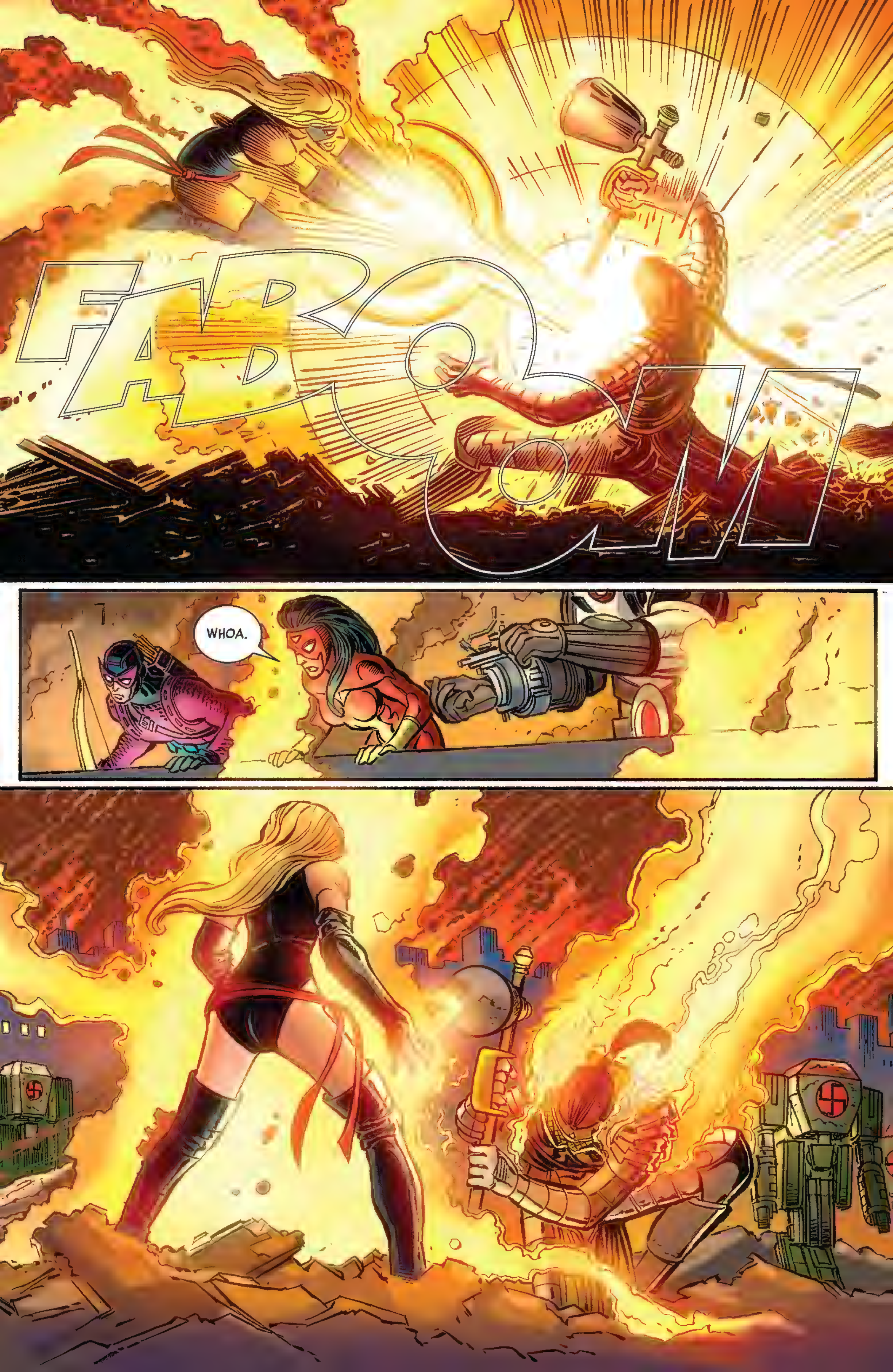

I'M GOING IN.
LISTEN, HAWKEYE, I CAN TAKE A BUNCH OF NAZIS IN RETROFITTED ARMOR.
YOU ARE **NOT** GOING IN.
YEAH, BUT YOU ***CAN'T*** TAKE WHATEVER IT IS THAT TOOK DOWN THE MOST SECURE BUILDING IN NEW YORK CITY.
HOW MANY BIG GUYS WITH HAMMERS DO YOU THINK WE CAN SURVIVE IN ONE DAY?
WE CAN'T DO NOTHING.
HE'S RIGHT.
WE CAN MAKE A PLAN INSTEAD OF JUMPING IN AND HOPING FOR THE BEST.
UGH. ALL MY STUFF WAS IN THERE.
YEAH, YOU WANNA KNOW WHAT ***ELSE*** WAS IN THERE?
ALL OF TONY STARK'S STUFF.
WHICH I AM ***ASSUMING*** IS MUCH MORE VALUABLE THAN YOUR HAIRBRUSH COLLECTION.
LEAVE ME ALONE... I'M VERY NERVOUS.
YOU DID ***NOT*** JUST SAY THAT.
THIS IS JESSICA DREW.
TELL CAPTAIN AMERICA WE ARE BACK IN NEW YORK CITY AND THINGS ARE BAD.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? WHERE IS HE?
I'M GOING IN, HAWKEYE.
ALL YOU'LL DO IS ALERT THEM TO OUR PRESENCE.
LISTEN, IF THEY'RE USING TECHNOLOGY, I MAY BE ABLE TO--
WAIT, SOMETHING IS--
AGH!

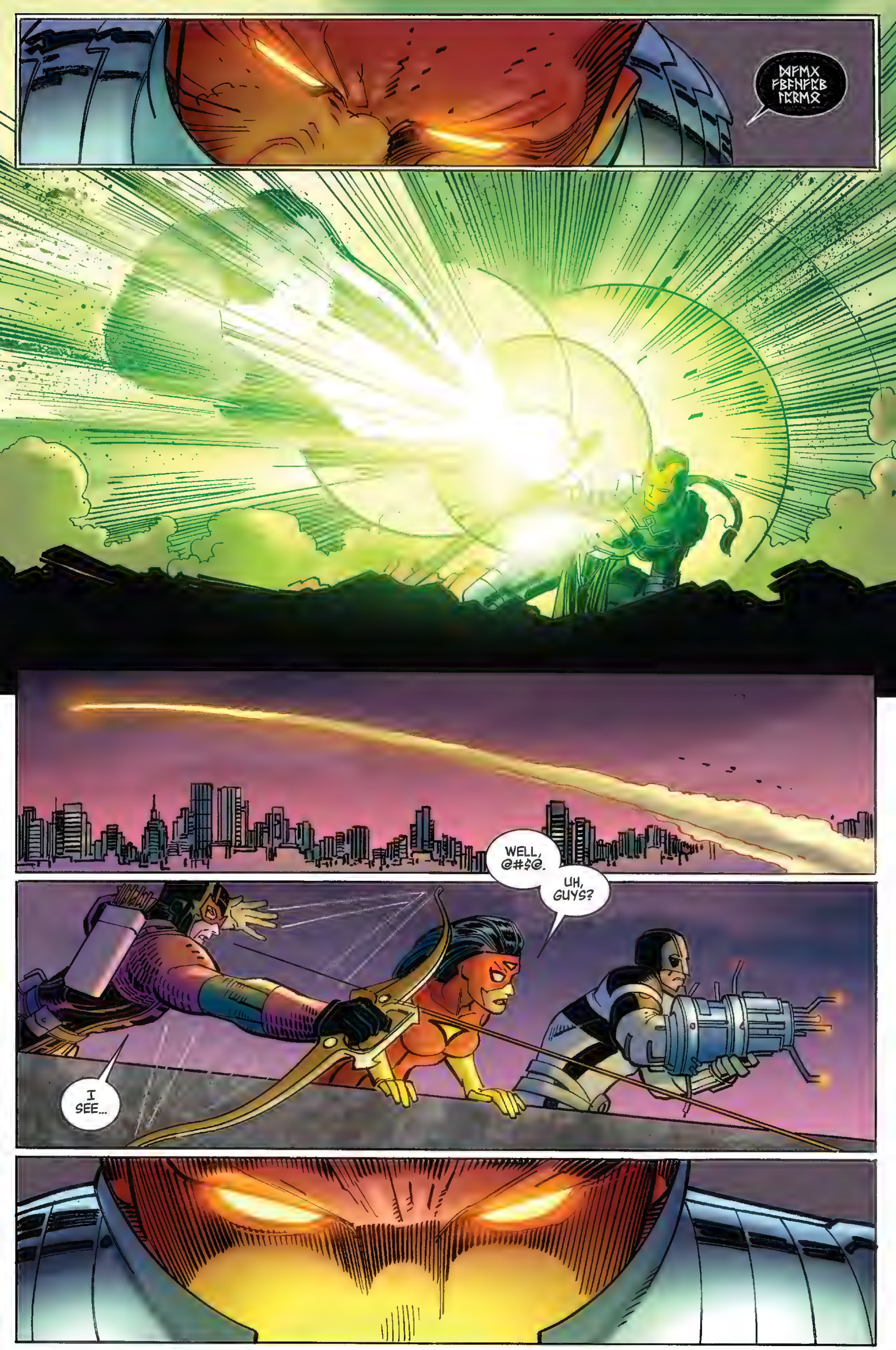

SIN.
THE RED SKULL'S DAUGHTER.
THE ARCHITECT OF *ALL* THIS HELL.
SHE WAS RIGHT THERE.
CUT OFF HER HEAD AND THIS IS OVER.
RIGHT?
BUT OUR PROBLEM WAS JUST THE SAME.
WORSE, ACTUALLY.
WE CAN'T WIN THE FIGHT WITH JUST US.
WE CAN'T.
WHAT DRIVES ME NUTS IS HAWKEYE.
HE TELLS US TO HOLD BACK AND WAIT FOR THE PLAN.
AND WHAT DOES HE GO AND DO?
NO ONE BELIEVES ME, BUT I SWEAR...
I DIDN'T EVEN REALIZE I DID IT.
EVERYTHING SHE DID TO US: BUCKY, THE TOWER, ALL OF IT...


FFBBXP!
CHUCK
WHAT DID YOU JUST DO?
I--
WELL #@$@!


JEEZ...


I KNOW CAROL.
SHE THOUGHT SHE WAS GIVING US THE OPPORTUNITY TO RUN.
WE WEREN'T GOING TO RUN.
I WAS MORE INTERESTED IN WHAT THESE BEINGS WERE DOING GATHERED AROUND AVENGERS TOWER LIKE THAT.
OBVIOUSLY, WELL NOT ***OBVIOUSLY***, BUT ***CLEARLY*** THEY WERE EXCAVATING HEIMDALL'S OBSERVATORY.
IF I KNEW A DAMN THING ABOUT ASGARDIAN ANYTHING I WOULD TELL YOU WHY...
ACTUALLY, I KNOW WHAT CAROL WAS TRYING TO DO.
SEE, SHE HAS THE ABILITY TO ABSORB ENERGY, CERTAIN TYPES OF ENERGY.
AND SEND THAT ENERGY RIGHT BACK OUT INTO THE WORLD UNDER HER CONTROL.
SHE THOUGHT SHE COULD GET IN THE RED SKULL'S FACE AND TAKE EVERYTHING SHE HAD AND THROW IT RIGHT BACK AT HER.
HEY, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, IT WAS AS GOOD A PLAN AS ANY.
IT WAS CLEARLY BETTER THAN MY PLAN WHICH WAS BLIND RAGE.
BUT...


FABOOM
WHOA.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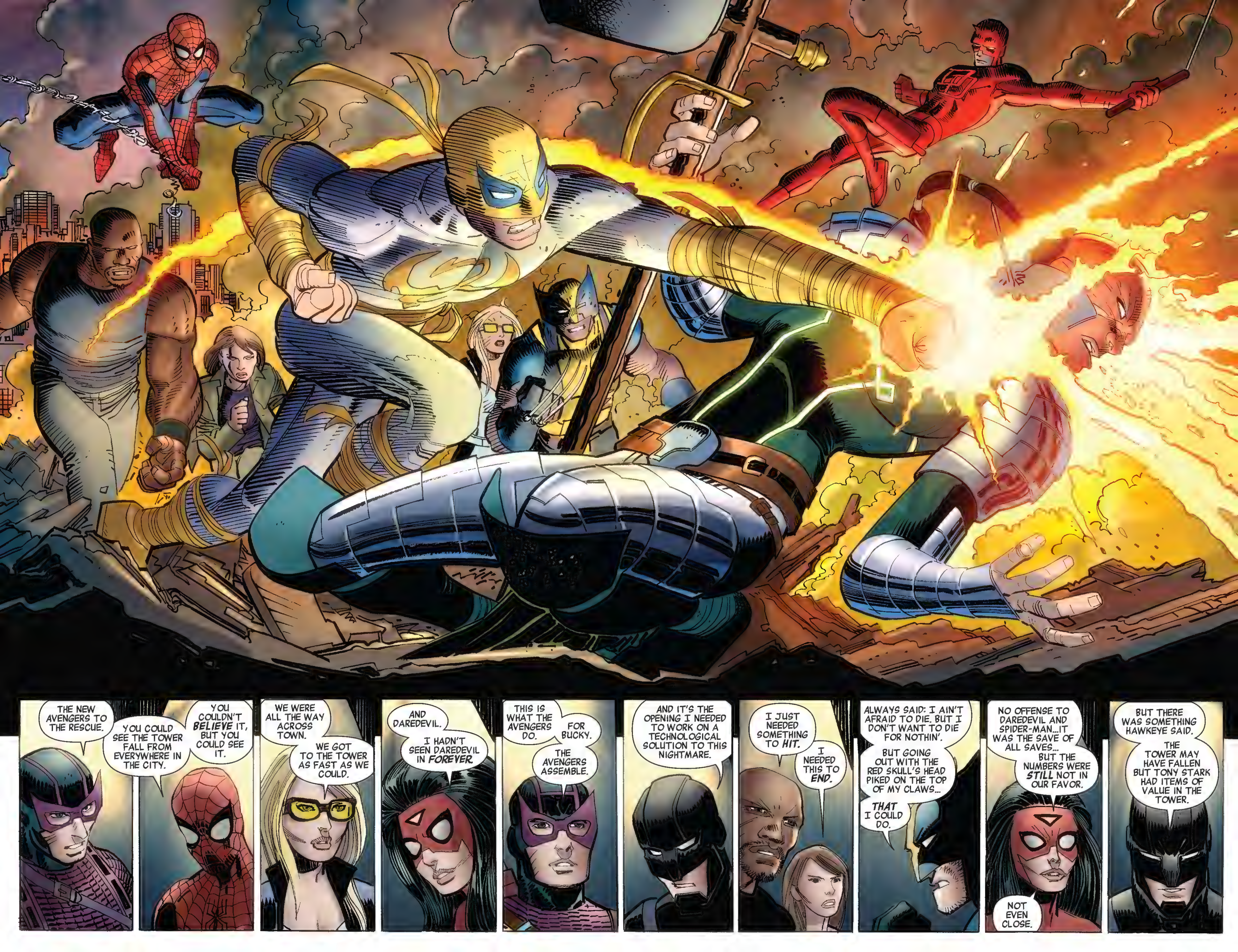
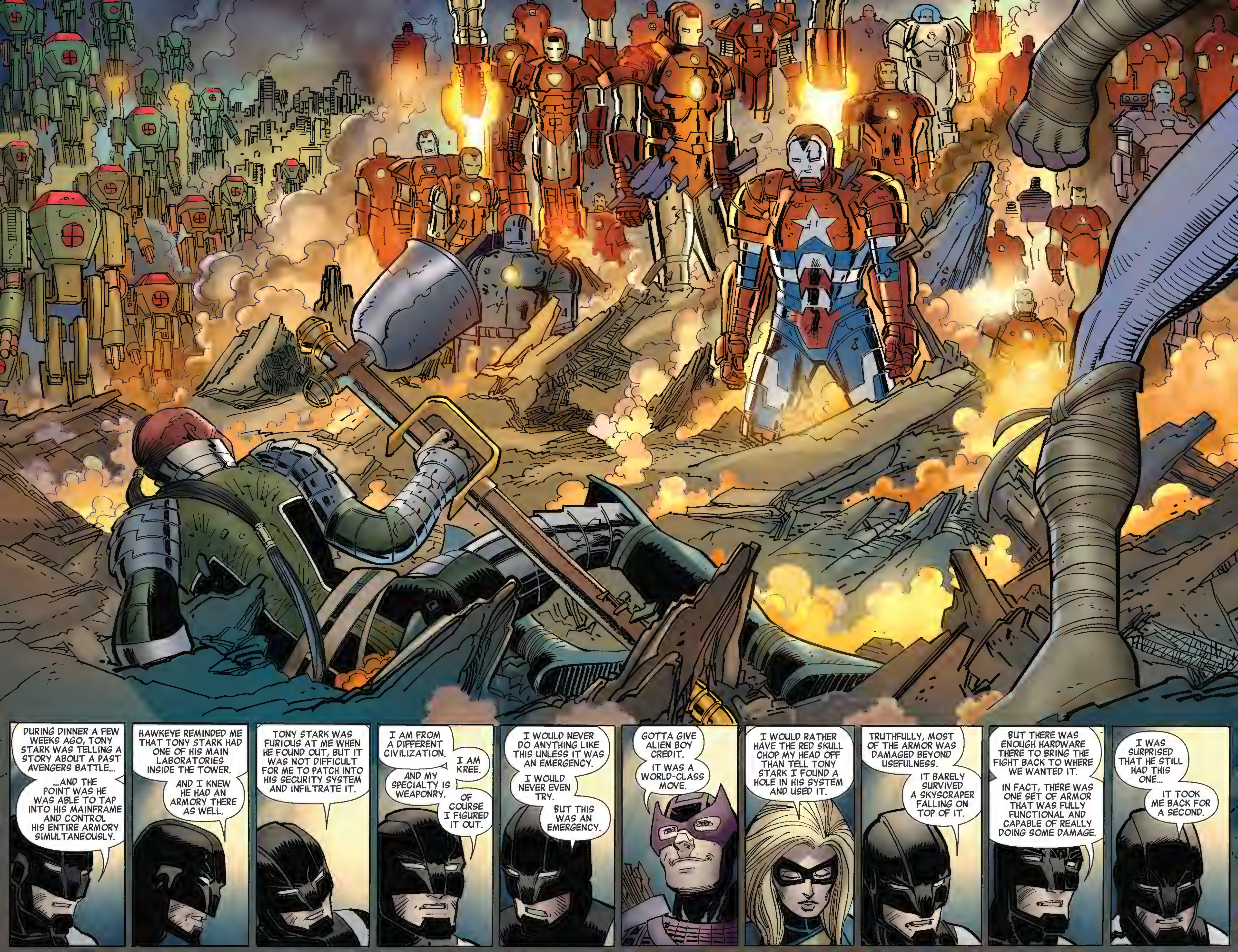
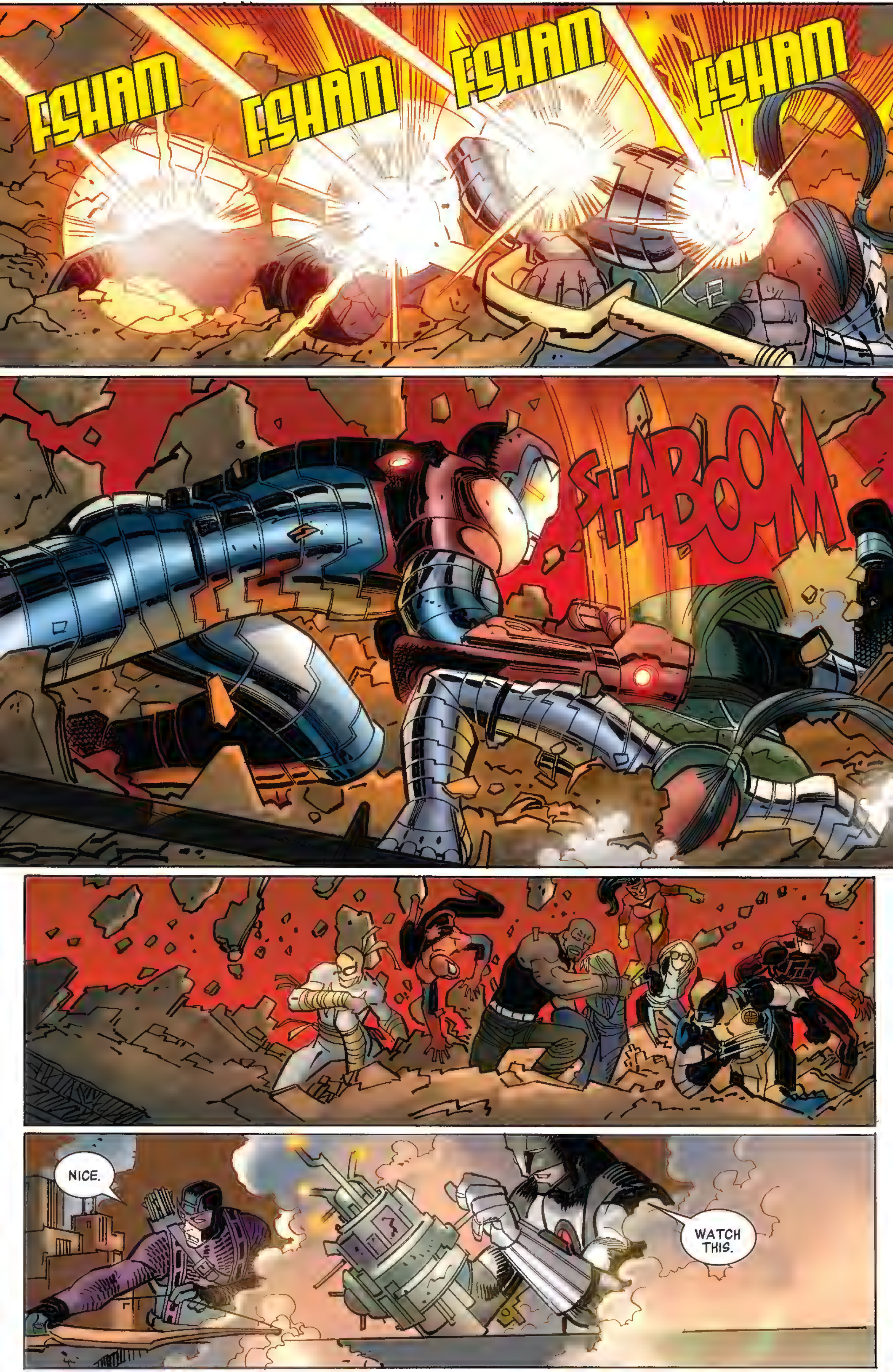
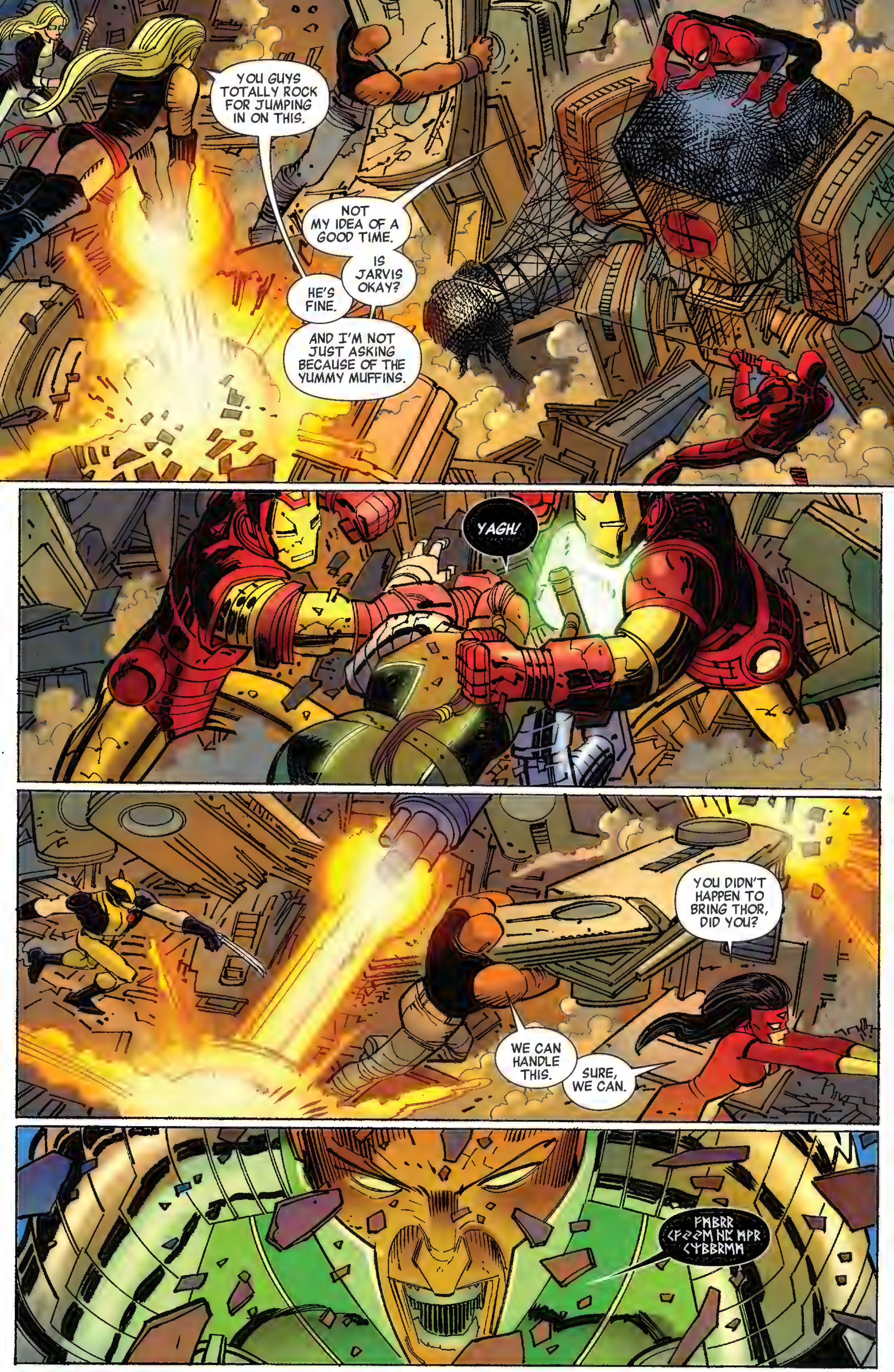
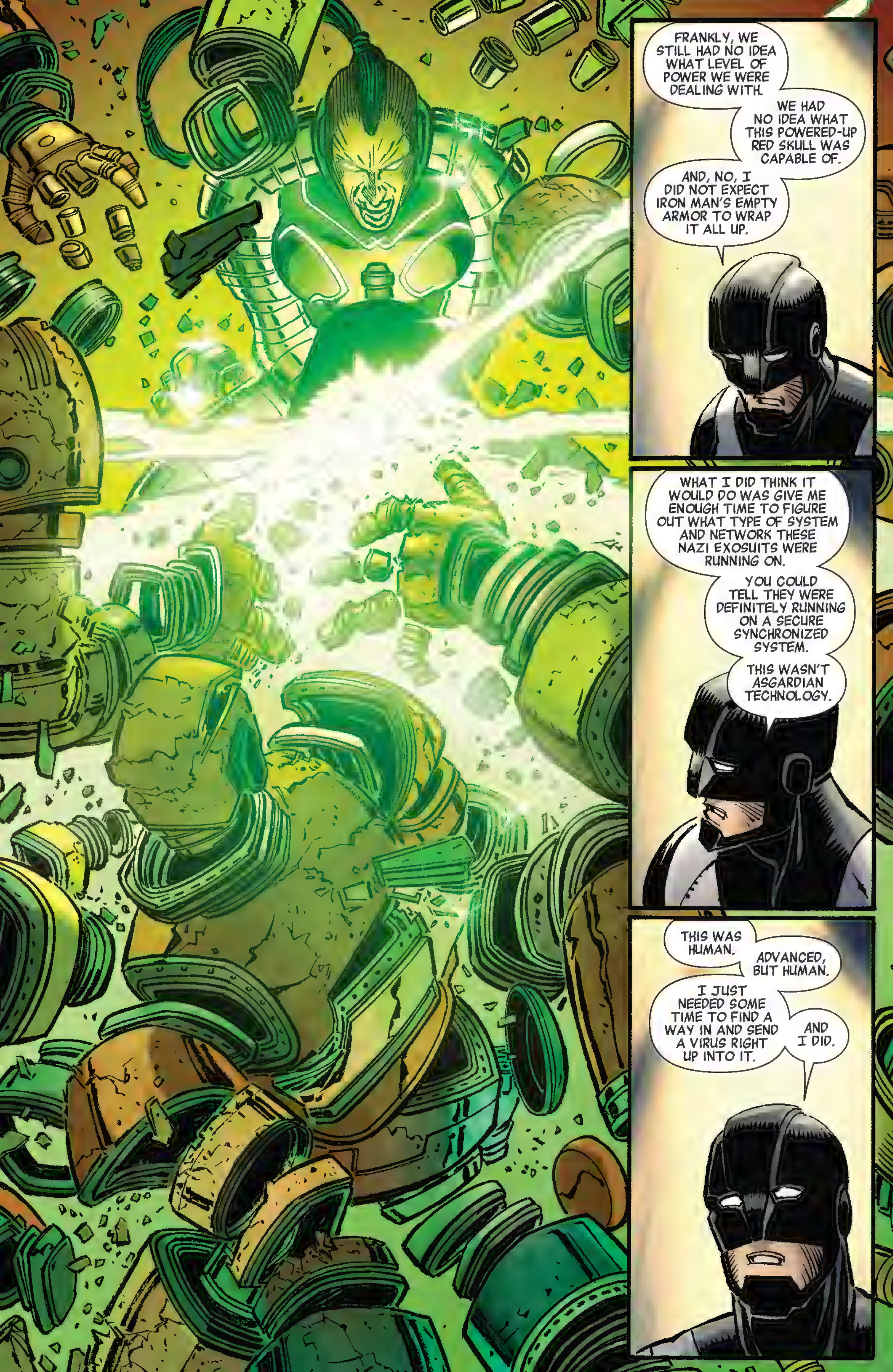
WELL, @#$@.
UH, GUYS?
I SEE...

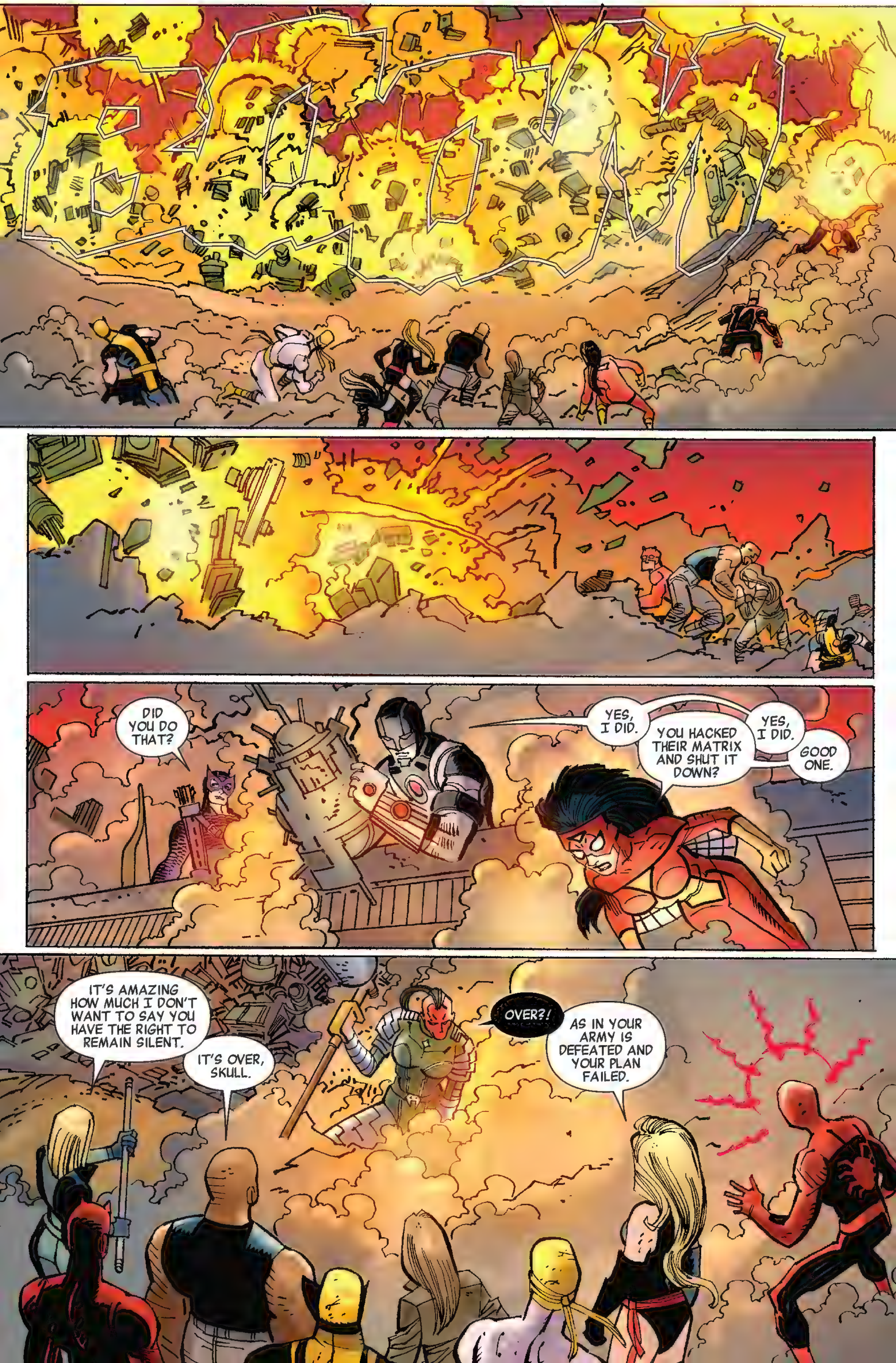

THE NEW AVENGERS TO THE RESCUE.
YOU COULD SEE THE TOWER FALL FROM EVERYWHERE IN THE CITY.
YOU COULDN'T *BELIEVE* IT, BUT YOU COULD SEE IT.
WE WERE ALL THE WAY ACROSS TOWN.
WE GOT TO THE TOWER AS FAST AS WE COULD.
AND DAREDEVIL.
I HADN'T SEEN DAREDEVIL IN *FOREVER.*
THIS IS WHAT THE AVENGERS DO.
FOR BUCKY.
THE AVENGERS ASSEMBLE.
AND IT'S THE OPENING I NEEDED TO WORK ON A TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTION TO THIS NIGHTMARE.
I JUST NEEDED SOMETHING TO *HIT.*
I NEEDED THIS TO *END.*
ALWAYS SAID: I AIN'T AFRAID TO DIE. BUT I DON'T WANT TO DIE FOR NOTHIN'.
BUT GOING OUT WITH THE RED SKULL'S HEAD PIKED ON THE TOP OF MY CLAWS...
THAT I COULD DO.
NO OFFENSE TO DAREDEVIL AND SPIDER-MAN...IT WAS THE SAVE OF ALL SAVES...
BUT THE NUMBERS WERE *STILL* NOT IN OUR FAVOR.
NOT EVEN CLOSE.
BUT THERE WAS SOMETHING HAWKEYE SAID.
THE TOWER MAY HAVE FALLEN BUT TONY STARK HAD ITEMS OF VALUE IN THE TOWER.

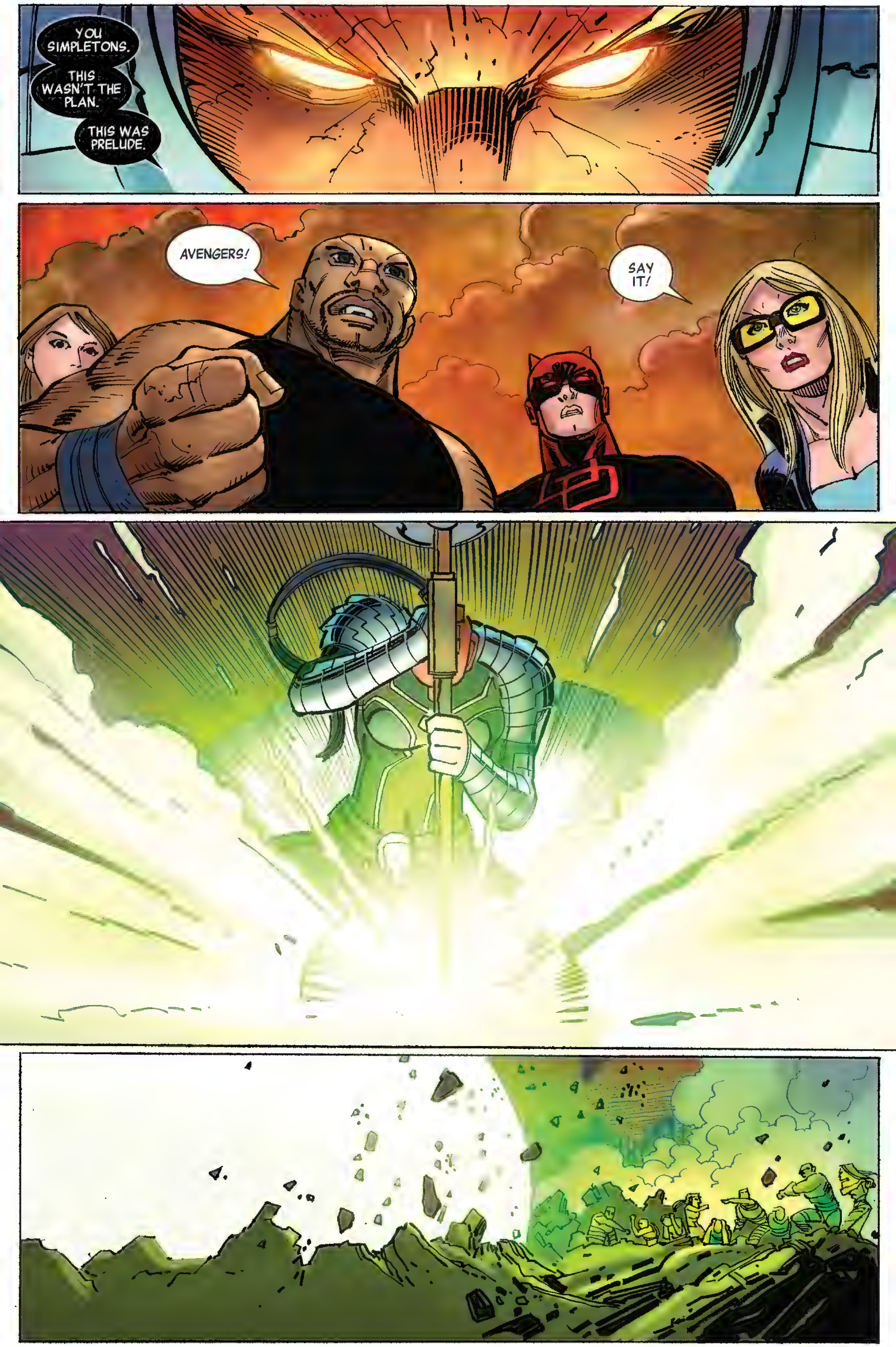

DURING DINNER A FEW WEEKS AGO, TONY STARK WAS TELLING A STORY ABOUT A PAST AVENGERS BATTLE...
...AND THE POINT WAS HE WAS ABLE TO TAP INTO HIS MAINFRAME AND CONTROL HIS ENTIRE ARMORY SIMULTANEOUSLY.
HAWKEYE REMINDED ME THAT TONY STARK HAD ONE OF HIS MAIN LABORATORIES INSIDE THE TOWER.
AND I KNEW HE HAD AN ARMORY THERE AS WELL.
TONY STARK WAS FURIOUS AT ME WHEN HE FOUND OUT, BUT IT WAS NOT DIFFICULT FOR ME TO PATCH INTO HIS SECURITY SYSTEM AND INFILTRATE IT.
I AM FROM A DIFFERENT CIVILIZATION.
I AM KREE.
AND MY SPECIALTY IS WEAPONRY.
OF COURSE I FIGURED IT OUT.
I WOULD NEVER DO ANYTHING LIKE THIS UNLESS IT WAS AN EMERGENCY.
I WOULD NEVER EVEN TRY.
BUT THIS WAS AN EMERGENCY.
GOTTA GIVE ALIEN BOY CREDIT.
IT WAS A WORLD-CLASS MOVE.
I WOULD RATHER HAVE THE RED SKULL CHOP MY HEAD OFF THAN TELL TONY STARK I FOUND A HOLE IN HIS SYSTEM AND USED IT.
TRUTHFULLY, MOST OF THE ARMOR WAS DAMAGED BEYOND USEFULNESS.
IT BARELY SURVIVED A SKYSCRAPER FALLING ON TOP OF IT.
BUT THERE WAS ENOUGH HARDWARE THERE TO BRING THE FIGHT BACK TO WHERE WE WANTED IT.
IN FACT, THERE WAS ONE SET OF ARMOR THAT WAS FULLY FUNCTIONAL AND CAPABLE OF REALLY DOING SOME DAMAGE.
I WAS SURPRISED THAT HE STILL HAD THIS ONE...
IT TOOK ME BACK FOR A SECOND.

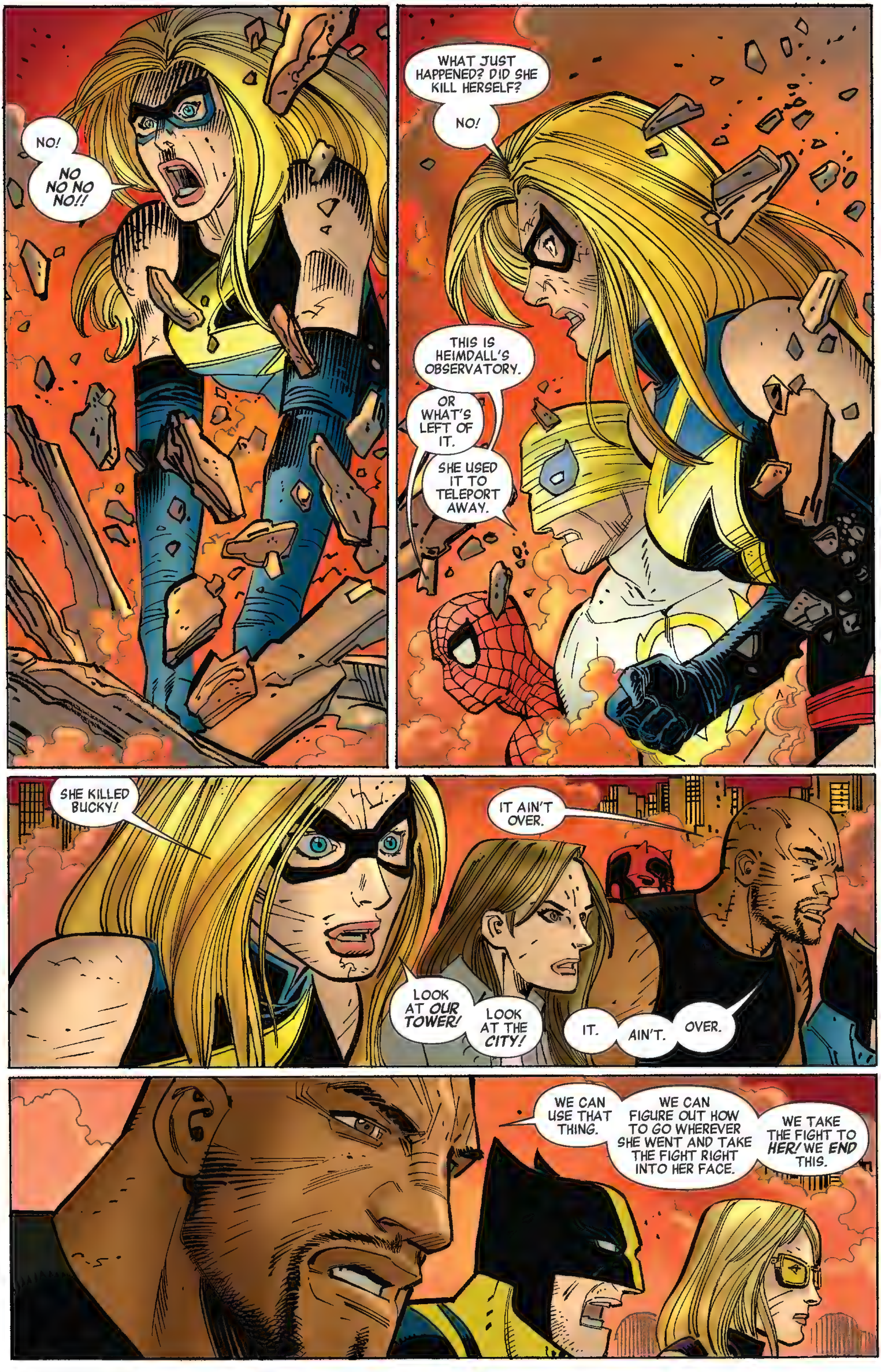

FSHAM
FSHAM
FSHAM
FSHAM
SHABOOM
NICE.
WATCH THIS.

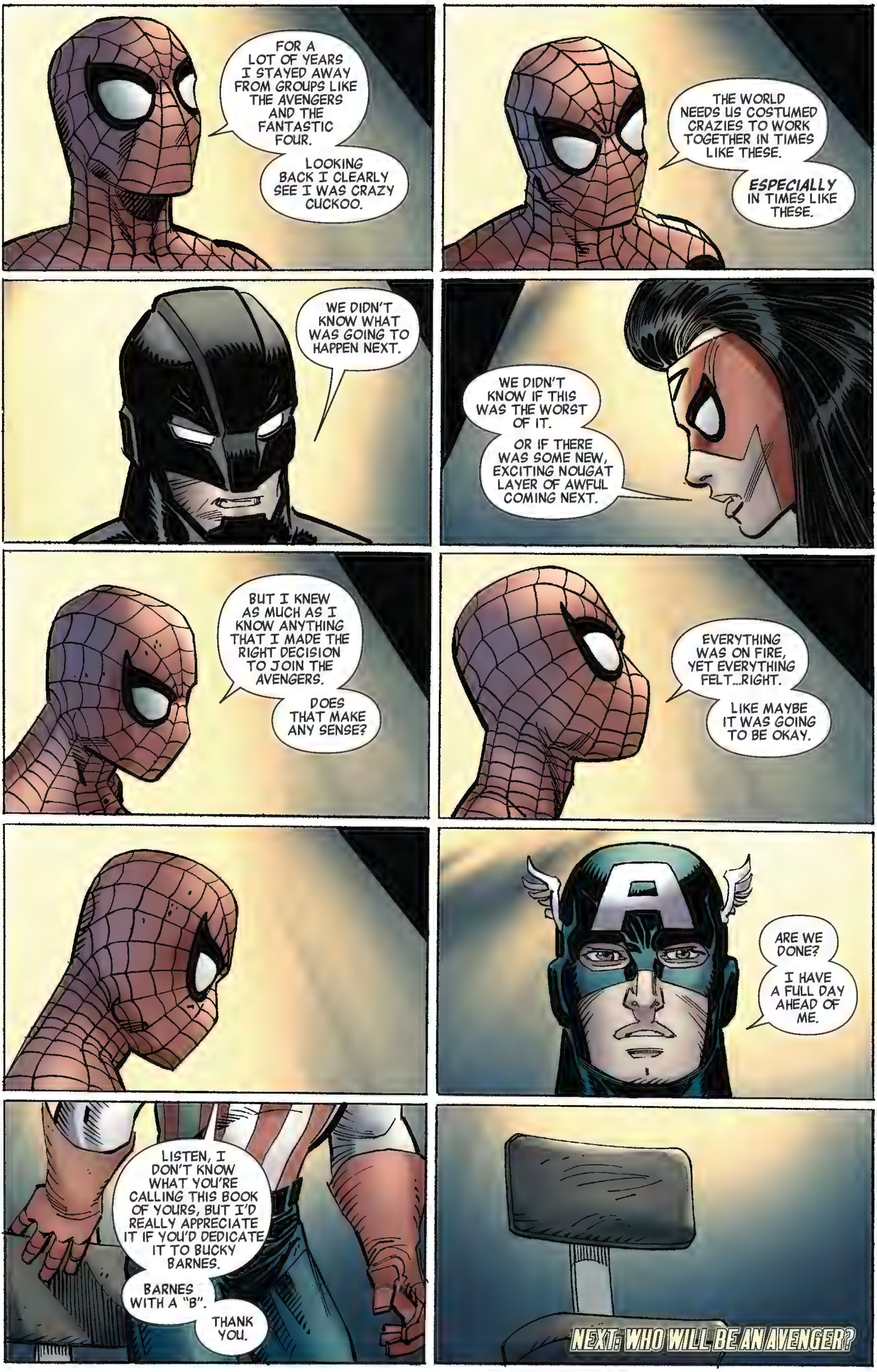

YOU GUYS TOTALLY ROCK FOR JUMPING IN ON THIS.
NOT MY IDEA OF A GOOD TIME.
IS JARVIS OKAY?
HE'S FINE.
AND I'M NOT JUST ASKING BECAUSE OF THE YUMMY MUFFINS.
YAGH!
YOU DIDN'T HAPPEN TO BRING THOR, DID YOU?
WE CAN HANDLE THIS.
SURE, WE CAN.
ᚠᛗᛒᚱᚱ ᚲᚠᛇᛇᛗ ᚾᚳ ᛗᛈᚱ ᚲᛉᛒᛒᚱᛗᚻ

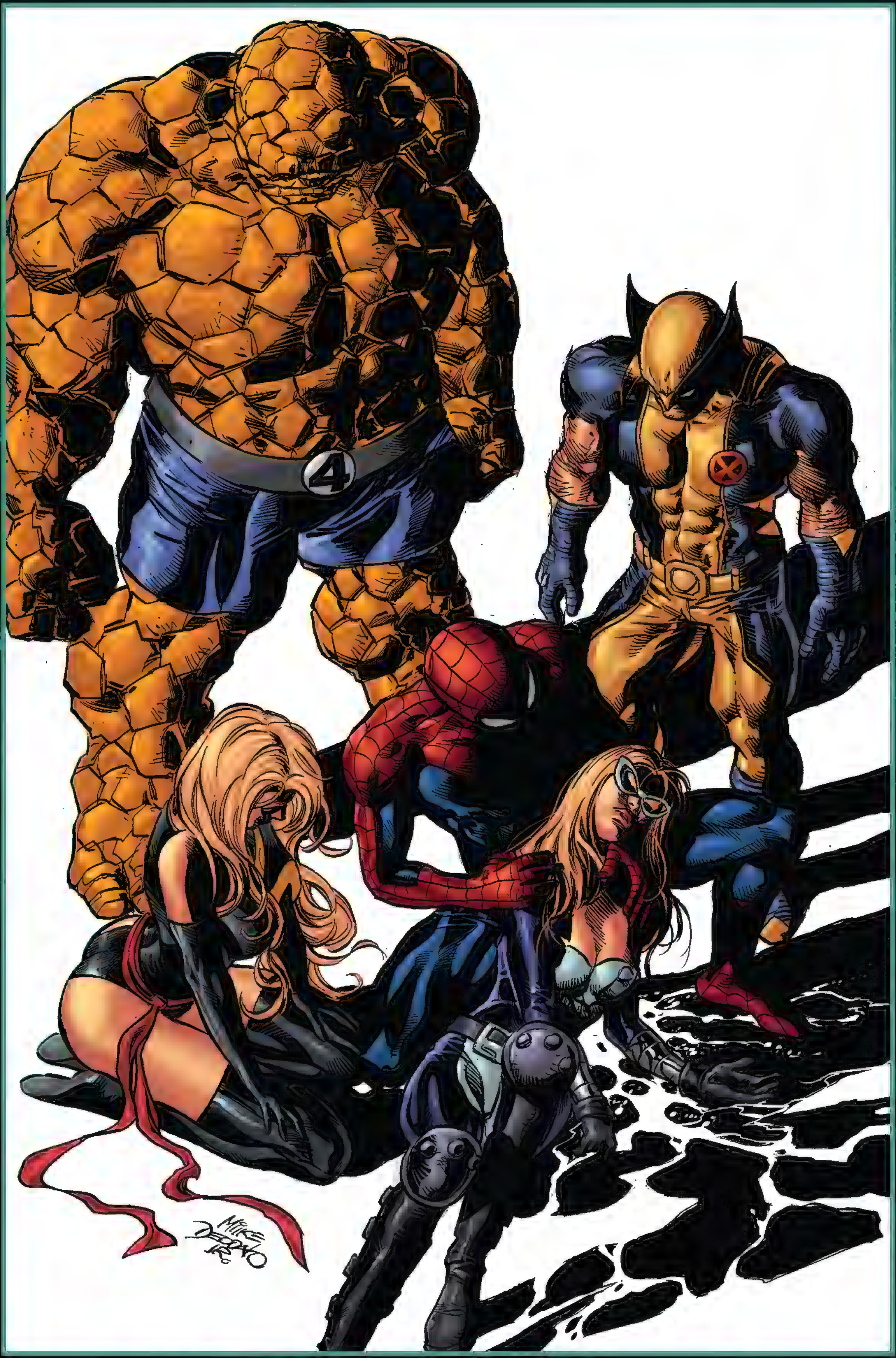

FRANKLY, WE STILL HAD NO IDEA WHAT LEVEL OF POWER WE WERE DEALING WITH.
WE HAD NO IDEA WHAT THIS POWERED-UP RED SKULL WAS CAPABLE OF.
AND, NO, I DID NOT EXPECT IRON MAN'S EMPTY ARMOR TO WRAP IT ALL UP.
WHAT I DID THINK IT WOULD DO WAS GIVE ME ENOUGH TIME TO FIGURE OUT WHAT TYPE OF SYSTEM AND NETWORK THESE NAZI EXOSUITS WERE RUNNING ON.
YOU COULD TELL THEY WERE DEFINITELY RUNNING ON A SECURE SYNCHRONIZED SYSTEM.
THIS WASN'T ASGARDIAN TECHNOLOGY.
THIS WAS HUMAN.
ADVANCED, BUT HUMAN.
I JUST NEEDED SOME TIME TO FIND A WAY IN AND SEND A VIRUS RIGHT UP INTO IT.
AND I DID.


BOOM
DID YOU DO THAT?
YES, I DID.
YOU HACKED THEIR MATRIX AND SHUT IT DOWN?
YES, I DID.
GOOD ONE.
IT'S AMAZING HOW MUCH I DON'T WANT TO SAY YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT.
IT'S OVER, SKULL.
OVER?!
AS IN YOUR ARMY IS DEFEATED AND YOUR PLAN FAILED.

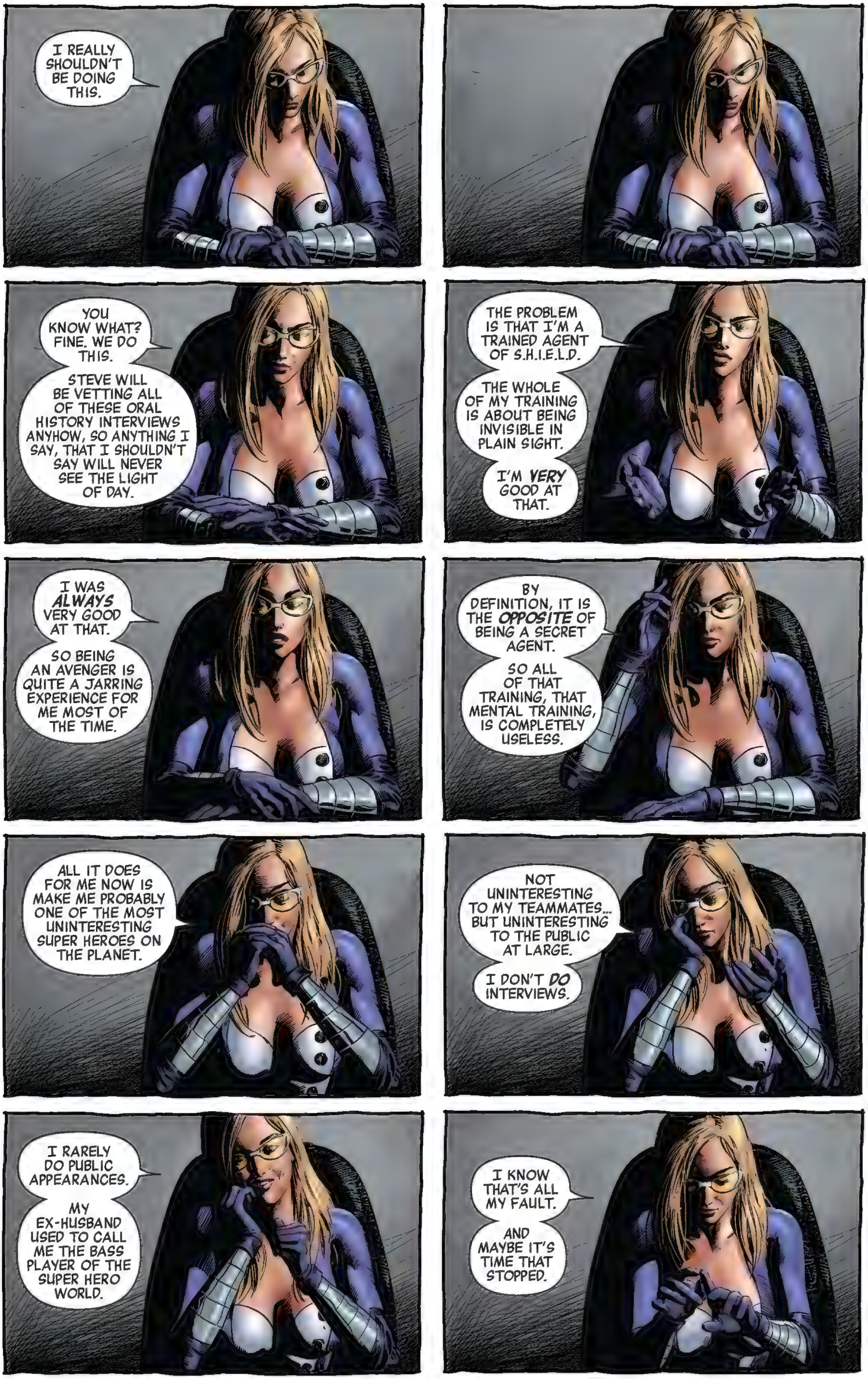

YOU SIMPLETONS.
THIS WASN'T THE PLAN.
THIS WAS PRELUDE.
AVENGERS!
SAY IT!

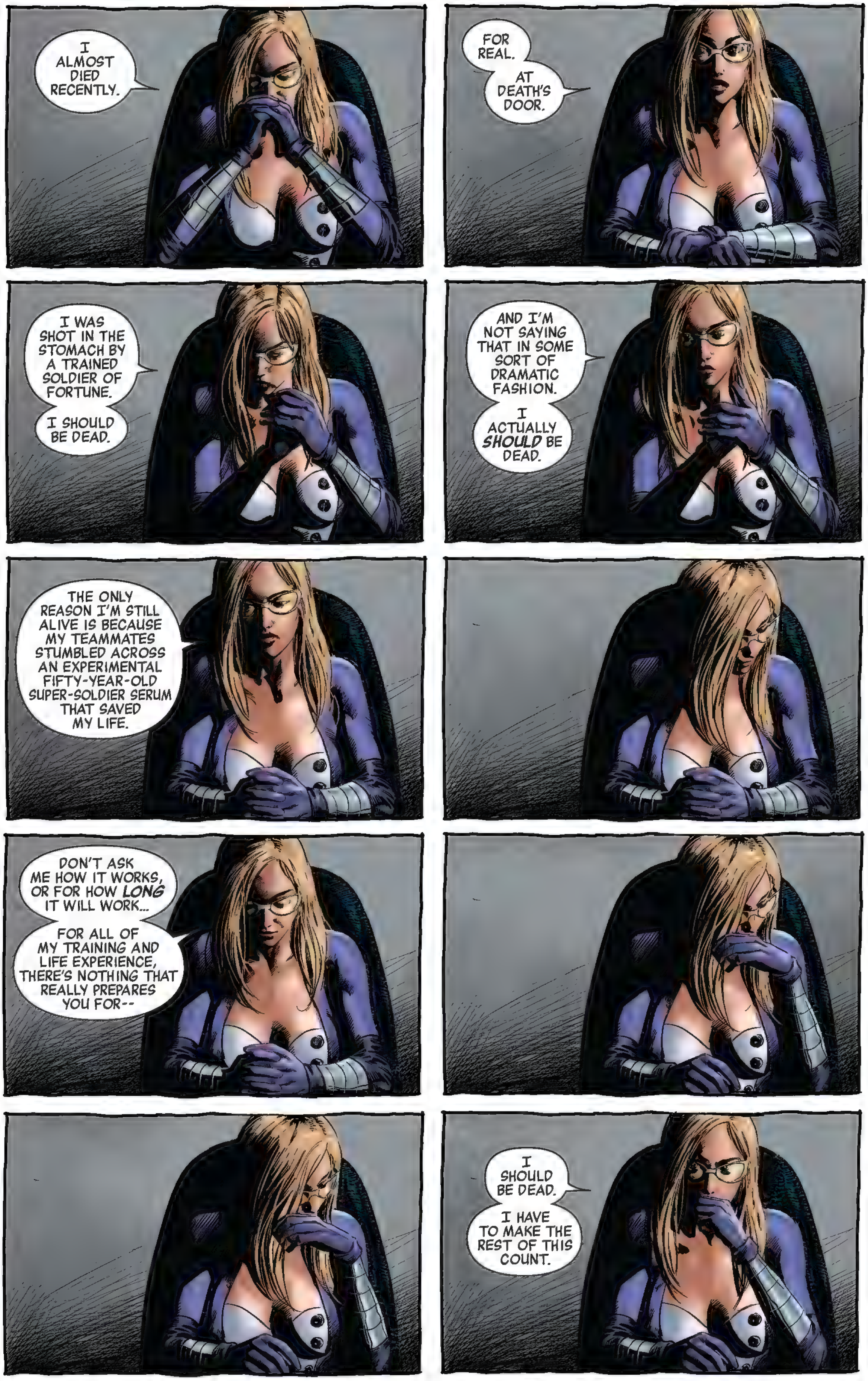

NO!
NO NO NO NO!!
WHAT JUST HAPPENED? DID SHE KILL HERSELF?
NO!
THIS IS HEIMDALL'S OBSERVATORY.
OR WHAT'S LEFT OF IT.
SHE USED IT TO TELEPORT AWAY.
SHE KILLED BUCKY!
IT AIN'T OVER.
LOOK AT *OUR TOWER!*
LOOK AT THE *CITY!*
IT.
AIN'T.
OVER.
WE CAN USE THAT THING.
WE CAN FIGURE OUT HOW TO GO WHEREVER SHE WENT AND TAKE THE FIGHT RIGHT INTO HER FACE.
WE TAKE THE FIGHT TO *HER!* WE *END* THIS.

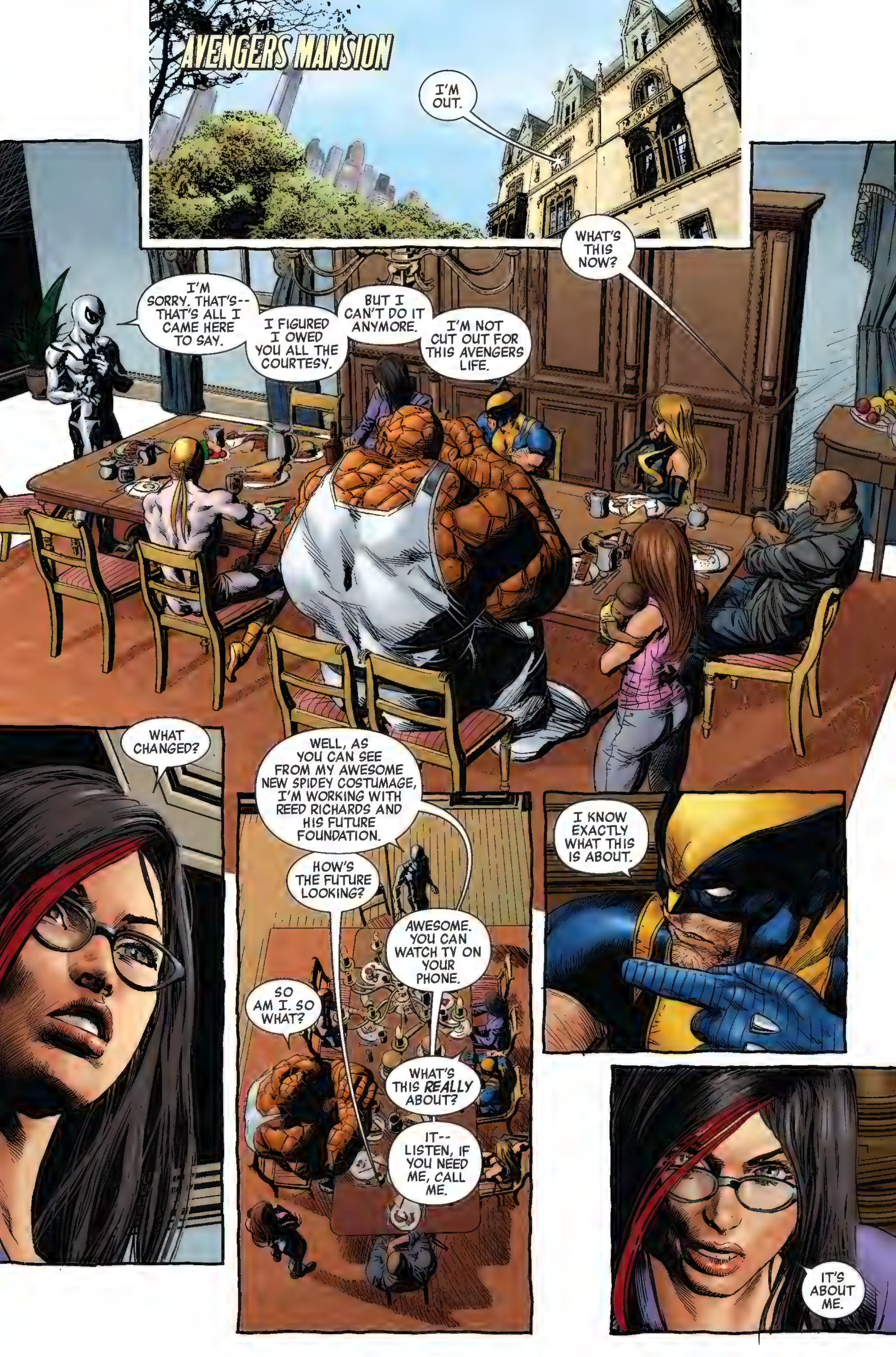

FOR A LOT OF YEARS I STAYED AWAY FROM GROUPS LIKE THE AVENGERS AND THE FANTASTIC FOUR.
LOOKING BACK I CLEARLY SEE I WAS CRAZY CUCKOO.
THE WORLD NEEDS US COSTUMED CRAZIES TO WORK TOGETHER IN TIMES LIKE THESE.
ESPECIALLY IN TIMES LIKE THESE.
WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN NEXT.
WE DIDN'T KNOW IF THIS WAS THE WORST OF IT.
OR IF THERE WAS SOME NEW, EXCITING NOUGAT LAYER OF AWFUL COMING NEXT.
BUT I KNEW AS MUCH AS I KNOW ANYTHING THAT I MADE THE RIGHT DECISION TO JOIN THE AVENGERS.
DOES THAT MAKE ANY SENSE?
EVERYTHING WAS ON FIRE, YET EVERYTHING FELT...RIGHT.
LIKE MAYBE IT WAS GOING TO BE OKAY.
ARE WE DONE?
I HAVE A FULL DAY AHEAD OF ME.
LISTEN, I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE CALLING THIS BOOK OF YOURS, BUT I'D REALLY APPRECIATE IT IF YOU'D DEDICATE IT TO BUCKY BARNES.
BARNES WITH A "B".
THANK YOU.
NEXT: WHO WILL BE AN AVENGER?

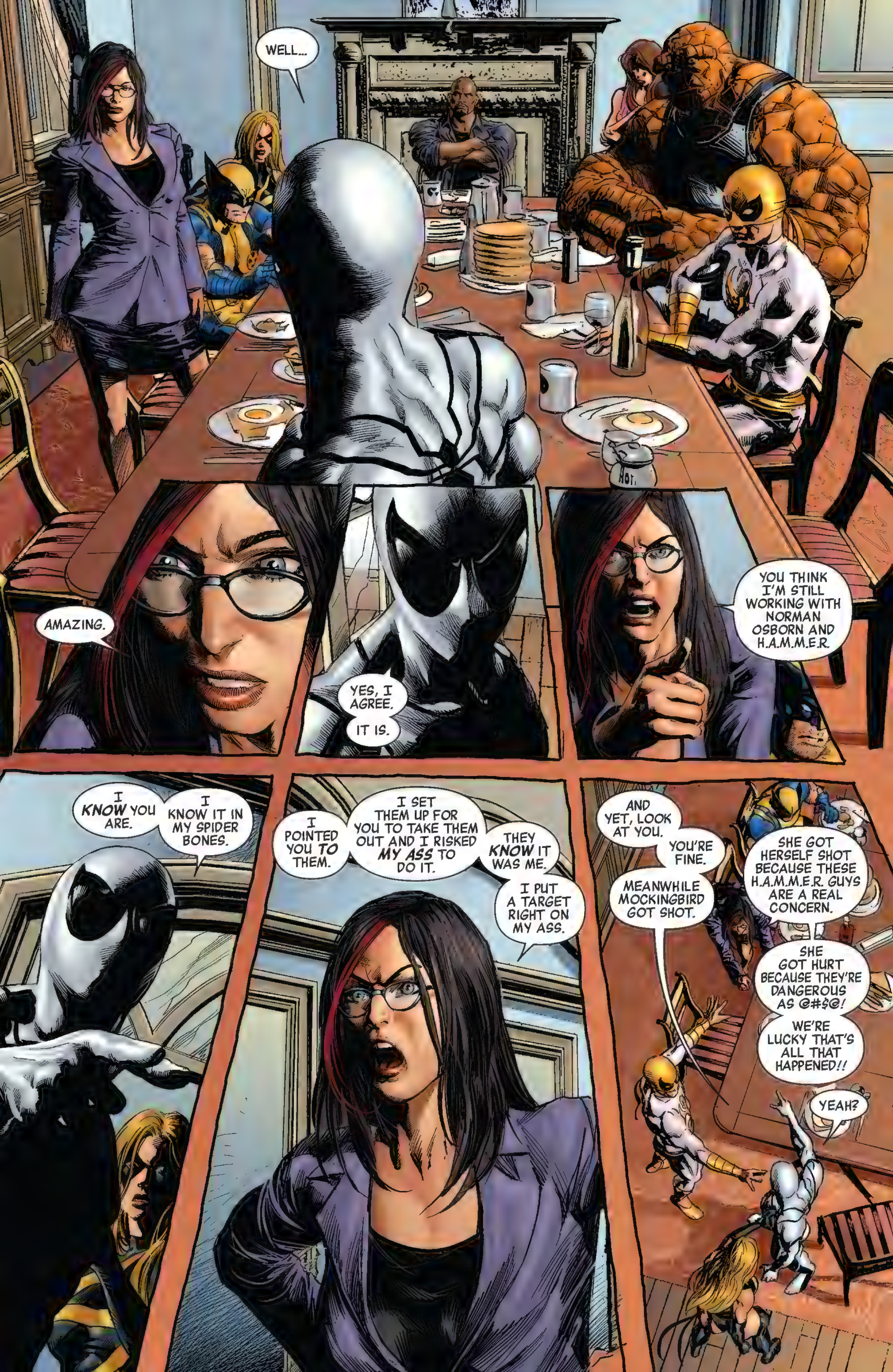

MIKE DEODATO JR.

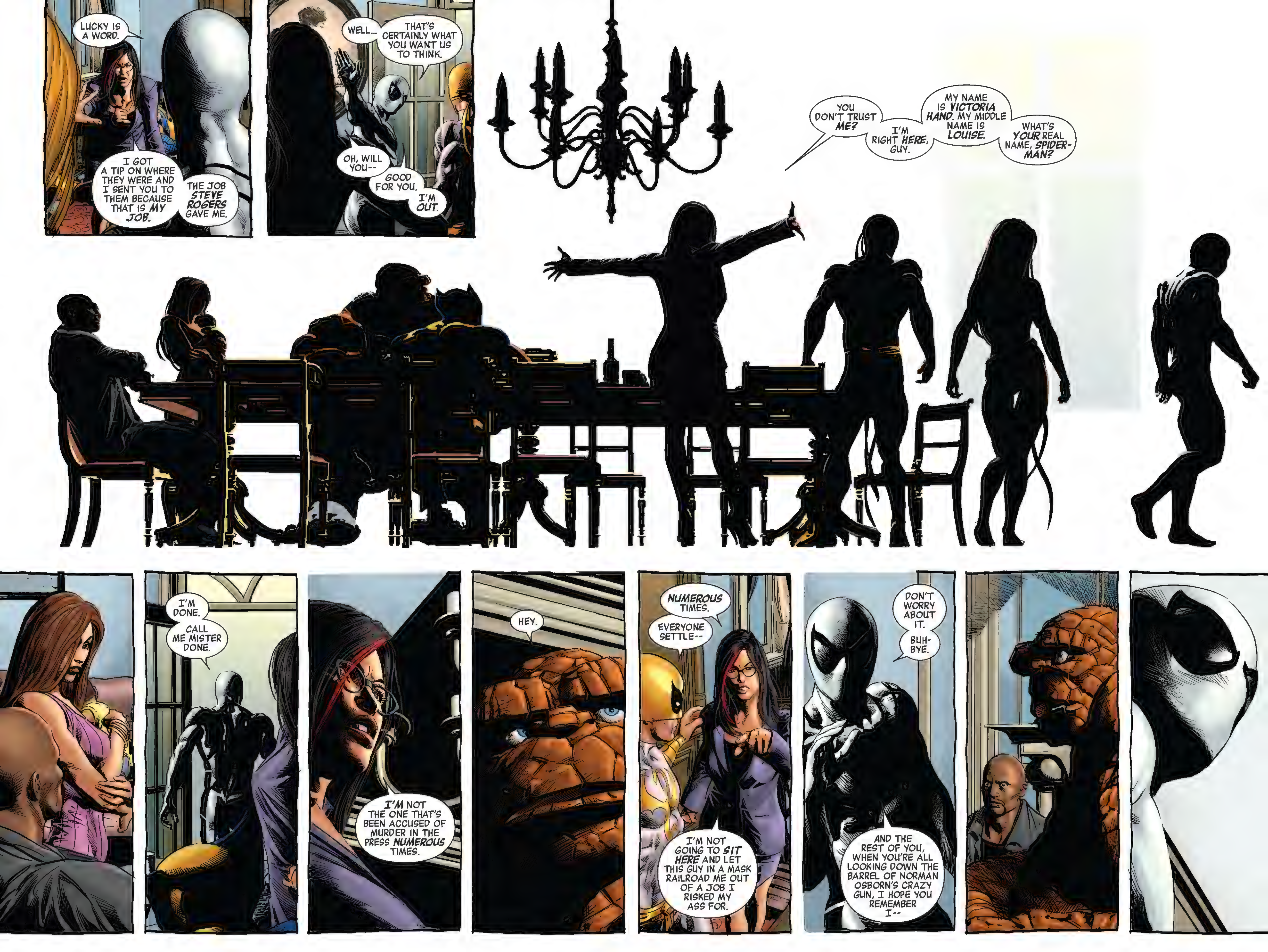
NEW AVENGERS #14

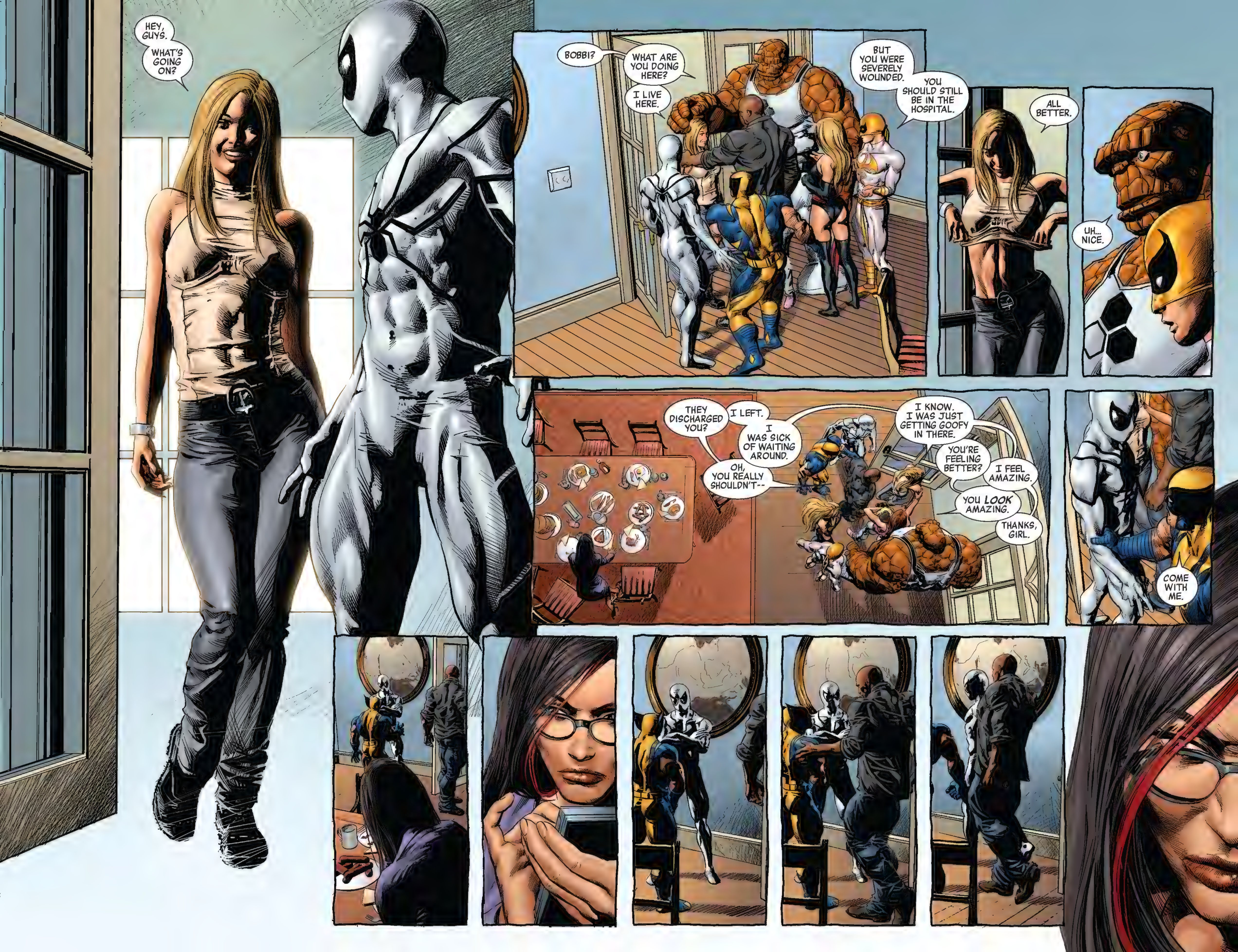

I REALLY SHOULDN'T BE DOING THIS.
YOU KNOW WHAT? FINE. WE DO THIS.
STEVE WILL BE VETTING ALL OF THESE ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS ANYHOW, SO ANYTHING I SAY, THAT I SHOULDN'T SAY WILL NEVER SEE THE LIGHT OF DAY.
THE PROBLEM IS THAT I'M A TRAINED AGENT OF S.H.I.E.L.D.
THE WHOLE OF MY TRAINING IS ABOUT BEING INVISIBLE IN PLAIN SIGHT.
I'M *VERY* GOOD AT THAT.
I WAS *ALWAYS* VERY GOOD AT THAT.
SO BEING AN AVENGER IS QUITE A JARRING EXPERIENCE FOR ME MOST OF THE TIME.
BY DEFINITION, IT IS THE *OPPOSITE* OF BEING A SECRET AGENT.
SO ALL OF THAT TRAINING, THAT MENTAL TRAINING, IS COMPLETELY USELESS.
ALL IT DOES FOR ME NOW IS MAKE ME PROBABLY ONE OF THE MOST UNINTERESTING SUPER HEROES ON THE PLANET.
NOT UNINTERESTING TO MY TEAMMATES... BUT UNINTERESTING TO THE PUBLIC AT LARGE.
I DON'T *DO* INTERVIEWS.
I RARELY DO PUBLIC APPEARANCES.
MY EX-HUSBAND USED TO CALL ME THE BASS PLAYER OF THE SUPER HERO WORLD.
I KNOW THAT'S ALL MY FAULT.
AND MAYBE IT'S TIME THAT STOPPED.

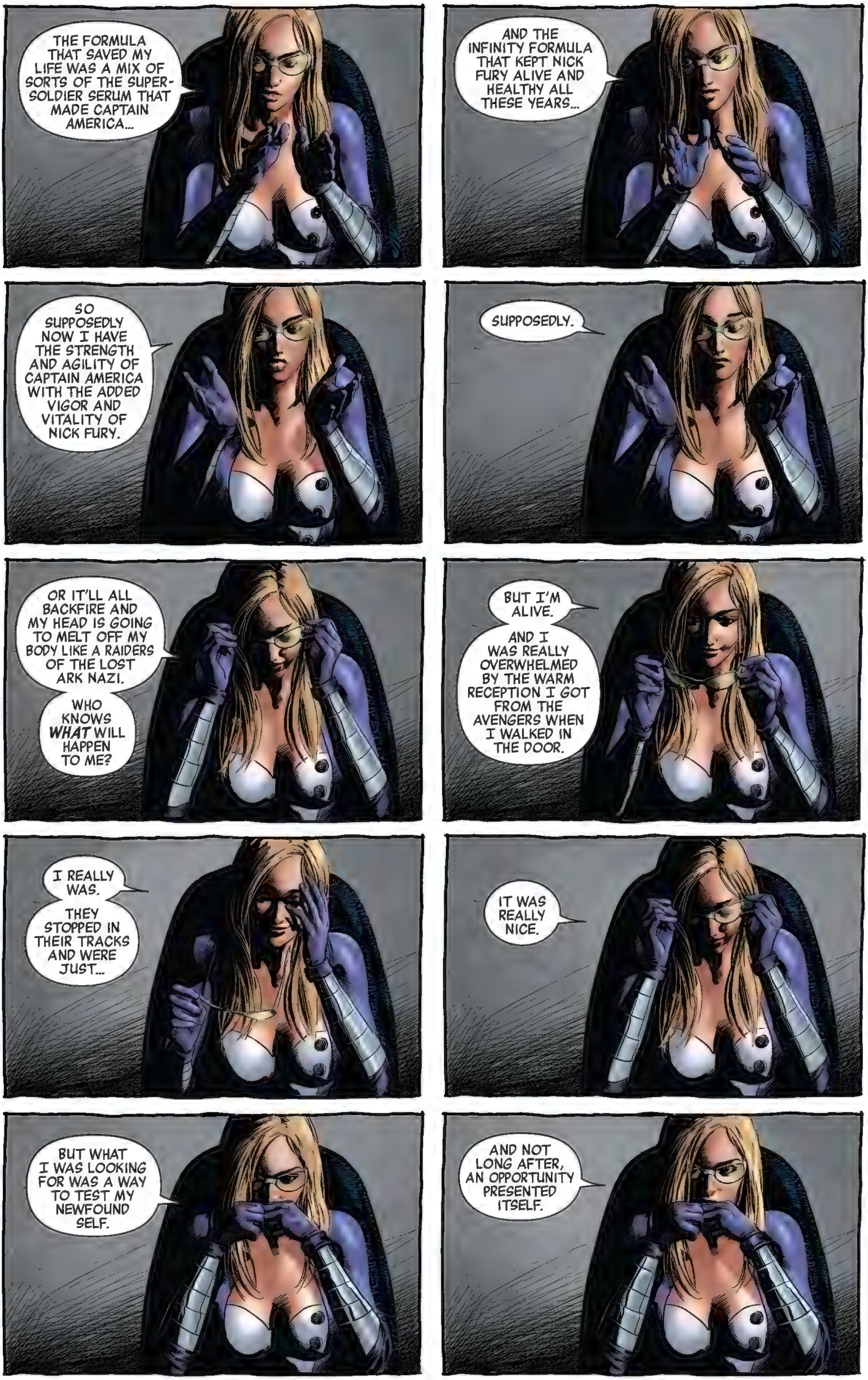

I ALMOST DIED RECENTLY.
FOR REAL.
AT DEATH'S DOOR.
I WAS SHOT IN THE STOMACH BY A TRAINED SOLDIER OF FORTUNE.
I SHOULD BE DEAD.
AND I'M NOT SAYING THAT IN SOME SORT OF DRAMATIC FASHION.
I ACTUALLY *SHOULD* BE DEAD.
THE ONLY REASON I'M STILL ALIVE IS BECAUSE MY TEAMMATES STUMBLED ACROSS AN EXPERIMENTAL FIFTY-YEAR-OLD SUPER-SOLDIER SERUM THAT SAVED MY LIFE.
DON'T ASK ME HOW IT WORKS, OR FOR HOW *LONG* IT WILL WORK...
FOR ALL OF MY TRAINING AND LIFE EXPERIENCE, THERE'S NOTHING THAT REALLY PREPARES YOU FOR--
I SHOULD BE DEAD.
I HAVE TO MAKE THE REST OF THIS COUNT.

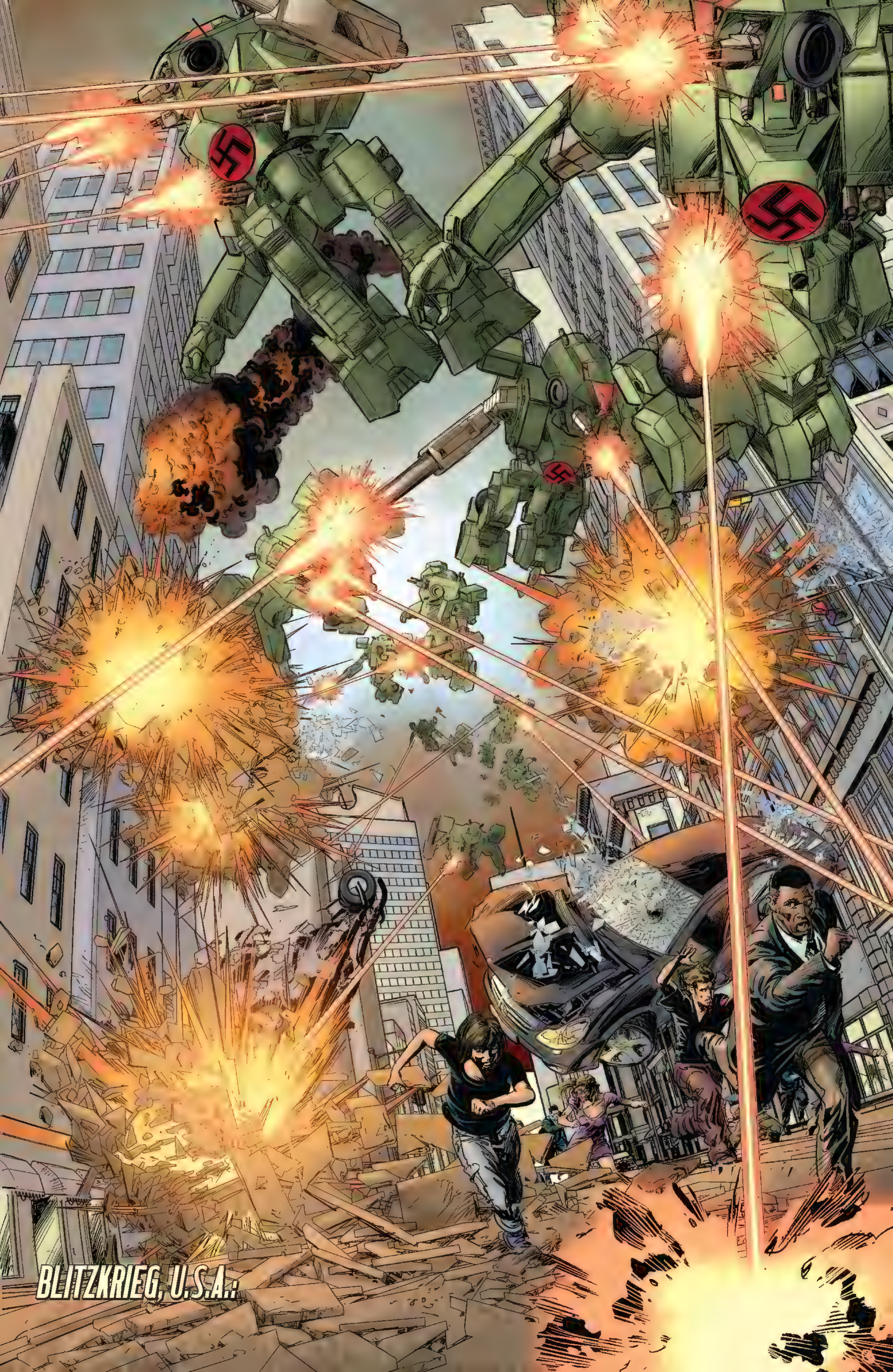

AVENGERS MANSION
I'M OUT.
WHAT'S THIS NOW?
I FIGURED I OWED YOU ALL THE COURTESY.
BUT I CAN'T DO IT ANYMORE.
I'M NOT CUT OUT FOR THIS AVENGERS LIFE.
I'M SORRY. THAT'S-- THAT'S ALL I CAME HERE TO SAY.
WHAT CHANGED?
WELL, AS YOU CAN SEE FROM MY AWESOME NEW SPIDEY COSTUMAGE, I'M WORKING WITH REED RICHARDS AND HIS FUTURE FOUNDATION.
HOW'S THE FUTURE LOOKING?
AWESOME. YOU CAN WATCH TV ON YOUR PHONE.
SO AM I. SO WHAT?
WHAT'S THIS *REALLY* ABOUT?
IT-- LISTEN, IF YOU NEED ME, CALL ME.
I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT THIS IS ABOUT.
IT'S ABOUT ME.

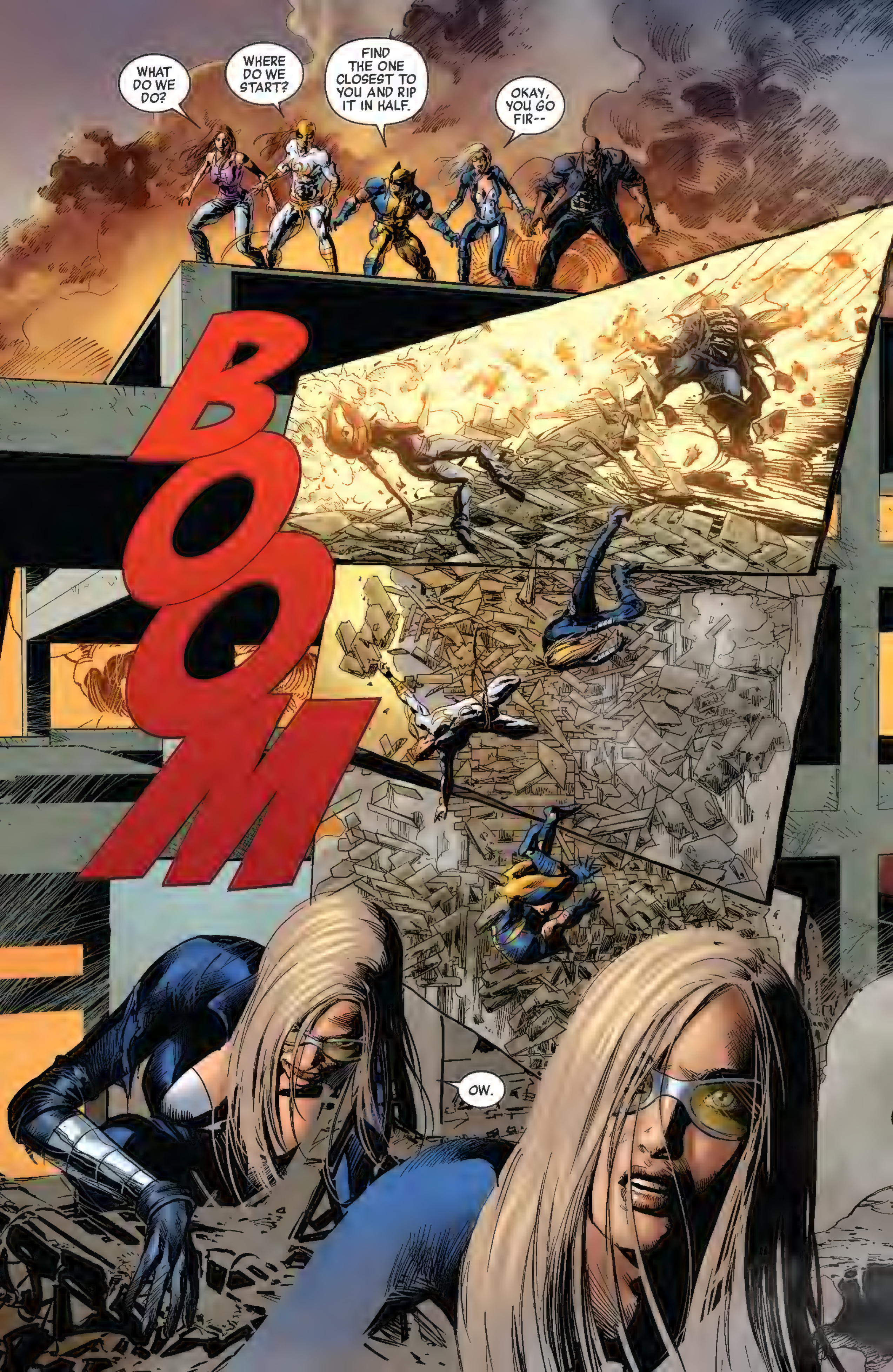

WELL...
AMAZING.
YES, I AGREE.
IT IS.
YOU THINK I'M STILL WORKING WITH NORMAN OSBORN AND H.A.M.M.E.R.
I **KNOW** YOU ARE.
I KNOW IT IN MY SPIDER BONES.
I POINTED YOU **TO** THEM.
I SET THEM UP FOR YOU TO TAKE THEM OUT AND I RISKED **MY ASS** TO DO IT.
THEY **KNOW** IT WAS ME.
I PUT A TARGET RIGHT ON MY ASS.
AND YET, LOOK AT YOU.
YOU'RE FINE.
MEANWHILE MOCKINGBIRD GOT SHOT.
SHE GOT HERSELF SHOT BECAUSE THESE H.A.M.M.E.R. GUYS ARE A REAL CONCERN.
SHE GOT HURT BECAUSE THEY'RE DANGEROUS AS @#$@!
WE'RE LUCKY THAT'S ALL THAT HAPPENED!!
YEAH?

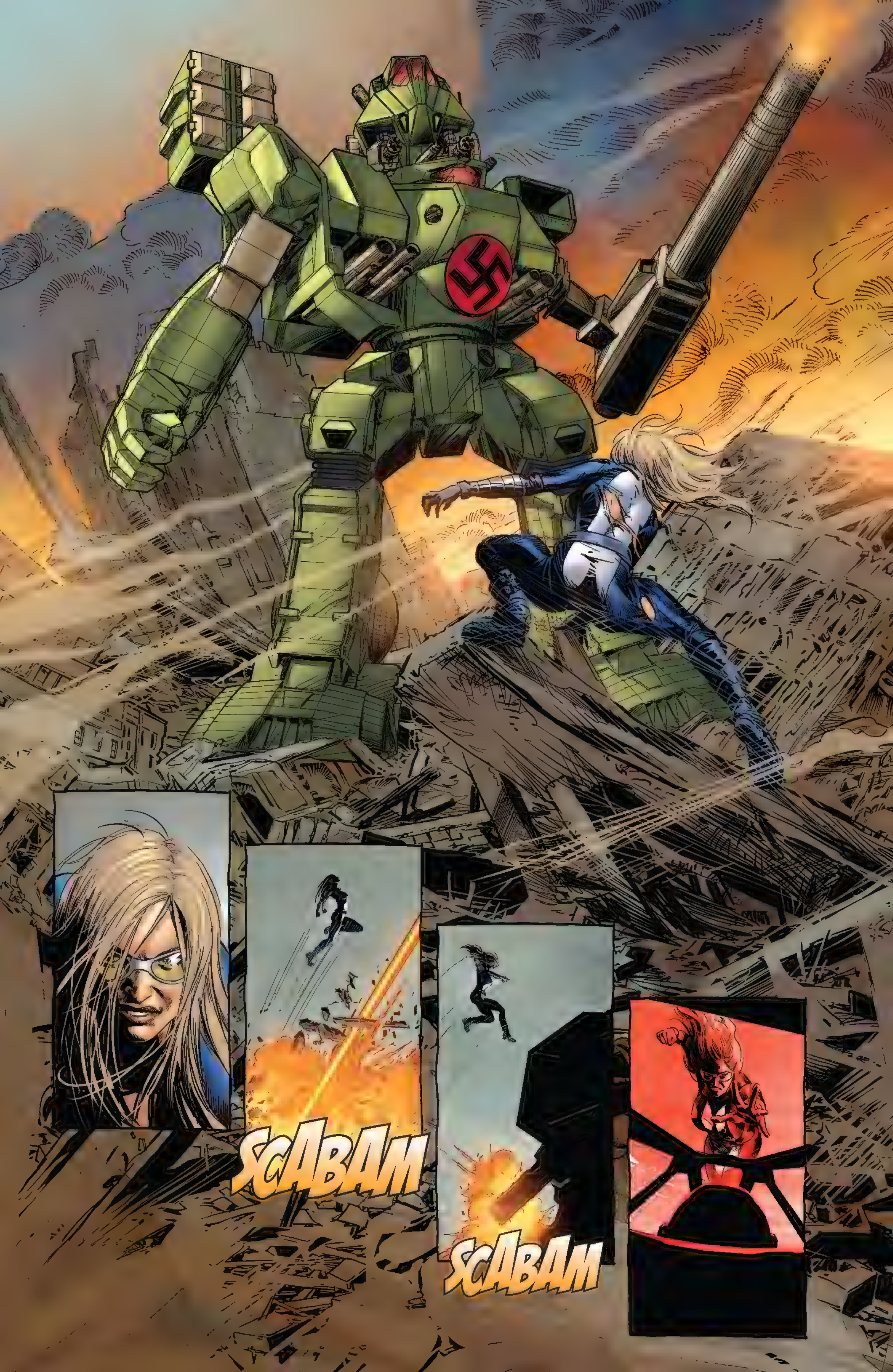

LUCKY IS A WORD.
I GOT A TIP ON WHERE THEY WERE AND I SENT YOU TO THEM BECAUSE THAT IS MY JOB.
THE JOB STEVE ROGERS GAVE ME.
WELL...
THAT'S CERTAINLY WHAT YOU WANT US TO THINK.
OH, WILL YOU--
GOOD FOR YOU.
I'M OUT.
YOU DON'T TRUST ME?
I'M RIGHT HERE, GUY.
MY NAME IS VICTORIA HAND. MY MIDDLE NAME IS LOUISE.
WHAT'S YOUR REAL NAME, SPIDER-MAN?
I'M DONE.
CALL ME MISTER DONE.
I'M NOT THE ONE THAT'S BEEN ACCUSED OF MURDER IN THE PRESS NUMEROUS TIMES.
HEY.
NUMEROUS TIMES.
EVERYONE SETTLE--
I'M NOT GOING TO SIT HERE AND LET THIS GUY IN A MASK RAILROAD ME OUT OF A JOB I RISKED MY ASS FOR.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
BUH-BYE.
AND THE REST OF YOU, WHEN YOU'RE ALL LOOKING DOWN THE BARREL OF NORMAN OSBORN'S CRAZY GUN, I HOPE YOU REMEMBER I--

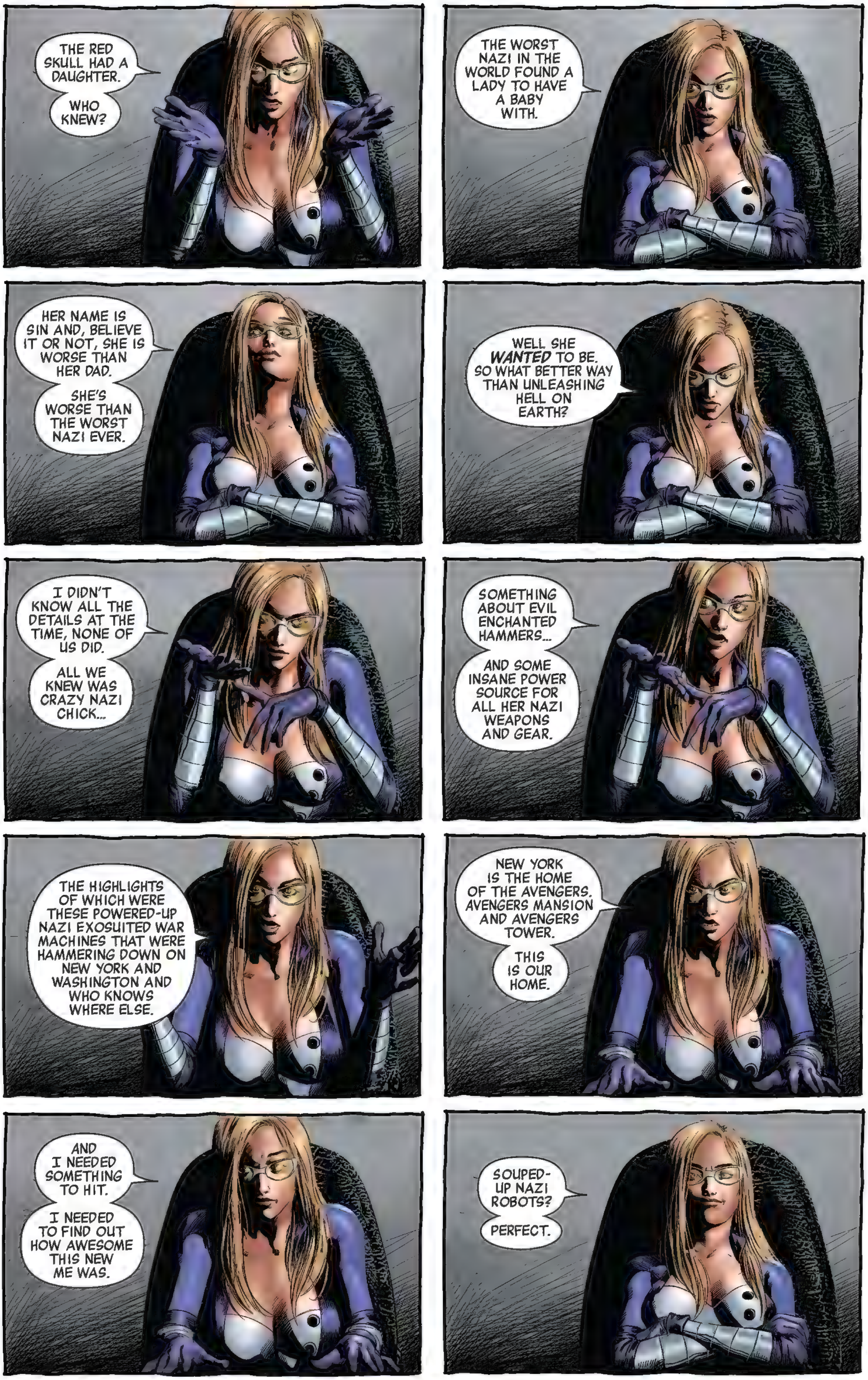

HEY, GUYS.
WHAT'S GOING ON?
BOBBI?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I LIVE HERE.
BUT YOU WERE SEVERELY WOUNDED.
YOU SHOULD STILL BE IN THE HOSPITAL.
ALL BETTER.
UH... NICE.
THEY DISCHARGED YOU?
I LEFT.
I WAS SICK OF WAITING AROUND.
OH, YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T--
I KNOW. I WAS JUST GETTING GOOFY IN THERE.
YOU'RE FEELING BETTER?
I FEEL AMAZING.
YOU *LOOK* AMAZING.
THANKS, GIRL.
COME WITH ME.

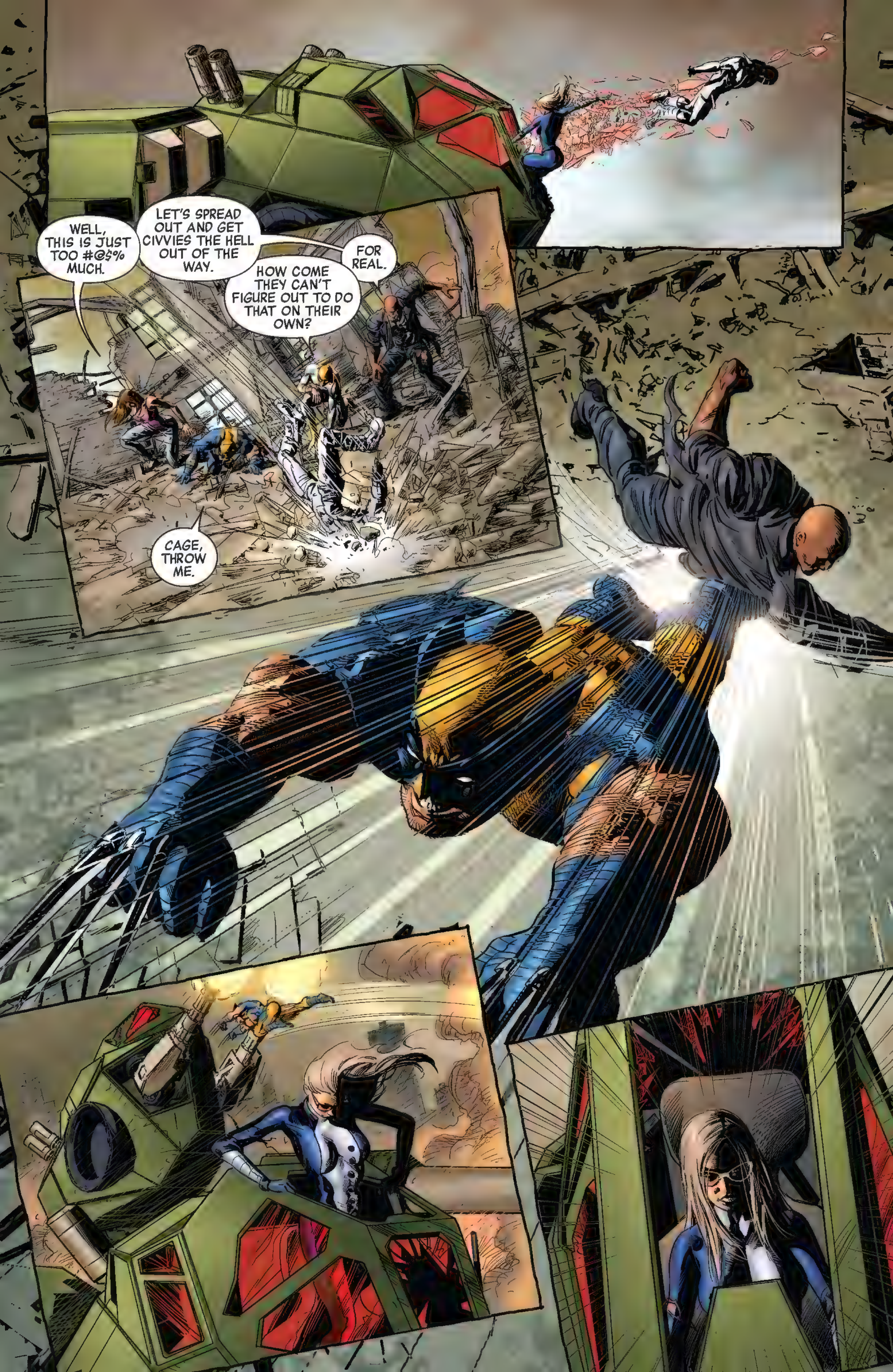

THE FORMULA THAT SAVED MY LIFE WAS A MIX OF SORTS OF THE SUPER-SOLDIER SERUM THAT MADE CAPTAIN AMERICA...
AND THE INFINITY FORMULA THAT KEPT NICK FURY ALIVE AND HEALTHY ALL THESE YEARS...
SO SUPPOSEDLY NOW I HAVE THE STRENGTH AND AGILITY OF CAPTAIN AMERICA WITH THE ADDED VIGOR AND VITALITY OF NICK FURY.
SUPPOSEDLY.
OR IT'LL ALL BACKFIRE AND MY HEAD IS GOING TO MELT OFF MY BODY LIKE A RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK NAZI.
WHO KNOWS ***WHAT*** WILL HAPPEN TO ME?
BUT I'M ALIVE.
AND I WAS REALLY OVERWHELMED BY THE WARM RECEPTION I GOT FROM THE AVENGERS WHEN I WALKED IN THE DOOR.
I REALLY WAS.
THEY STOPPED IN THEIR TRACKS AND WERE JUST...
IT WAS REALLY NICE.
BUT WHAT I WAS LOOKING FOR WAS A WAY TO TEST MY NEWFOUND SELF.
AND NOT LONG AFTER, AN OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED ITSELF.

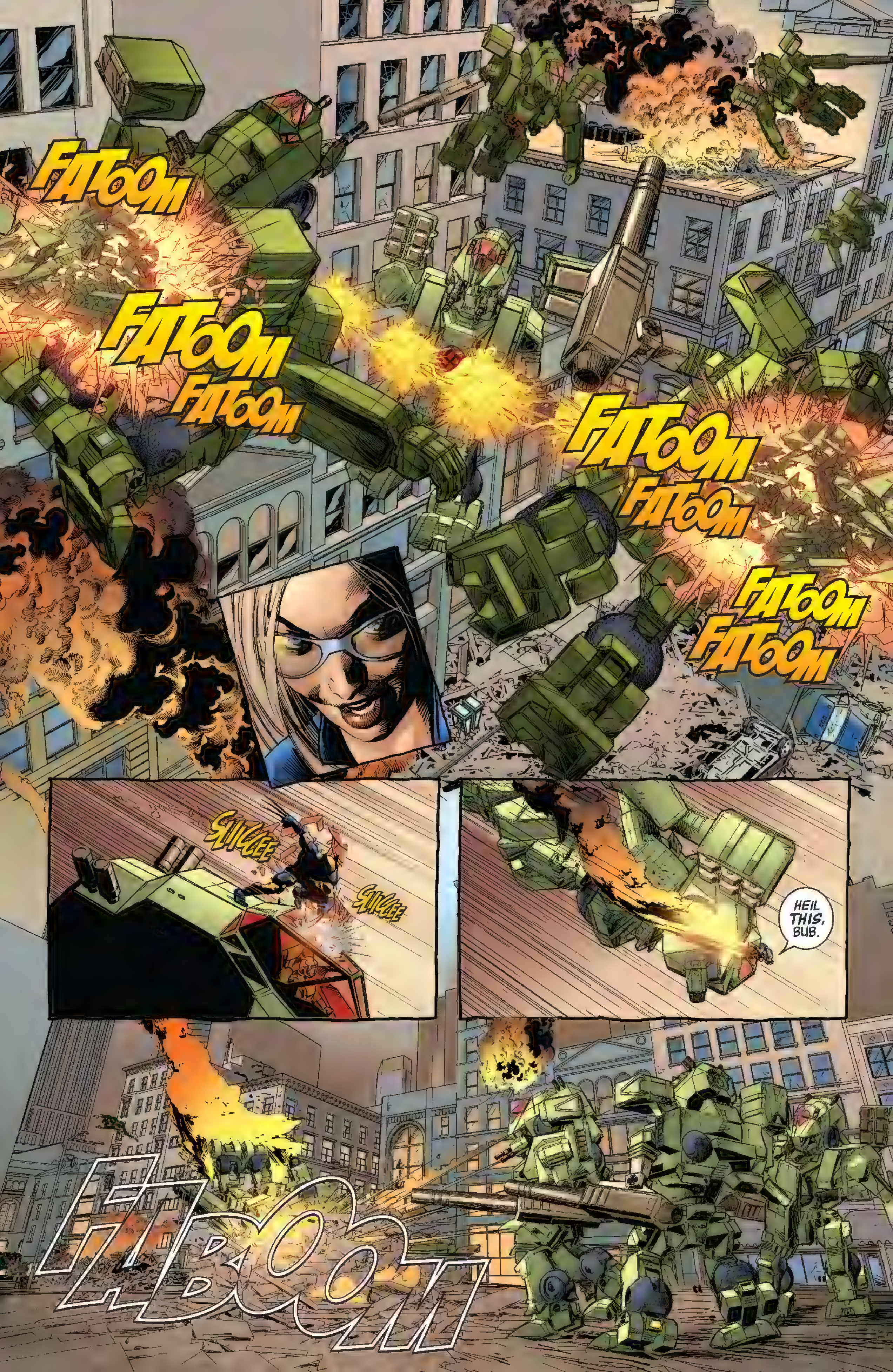

BLITZKRIEG, U.S.A.:

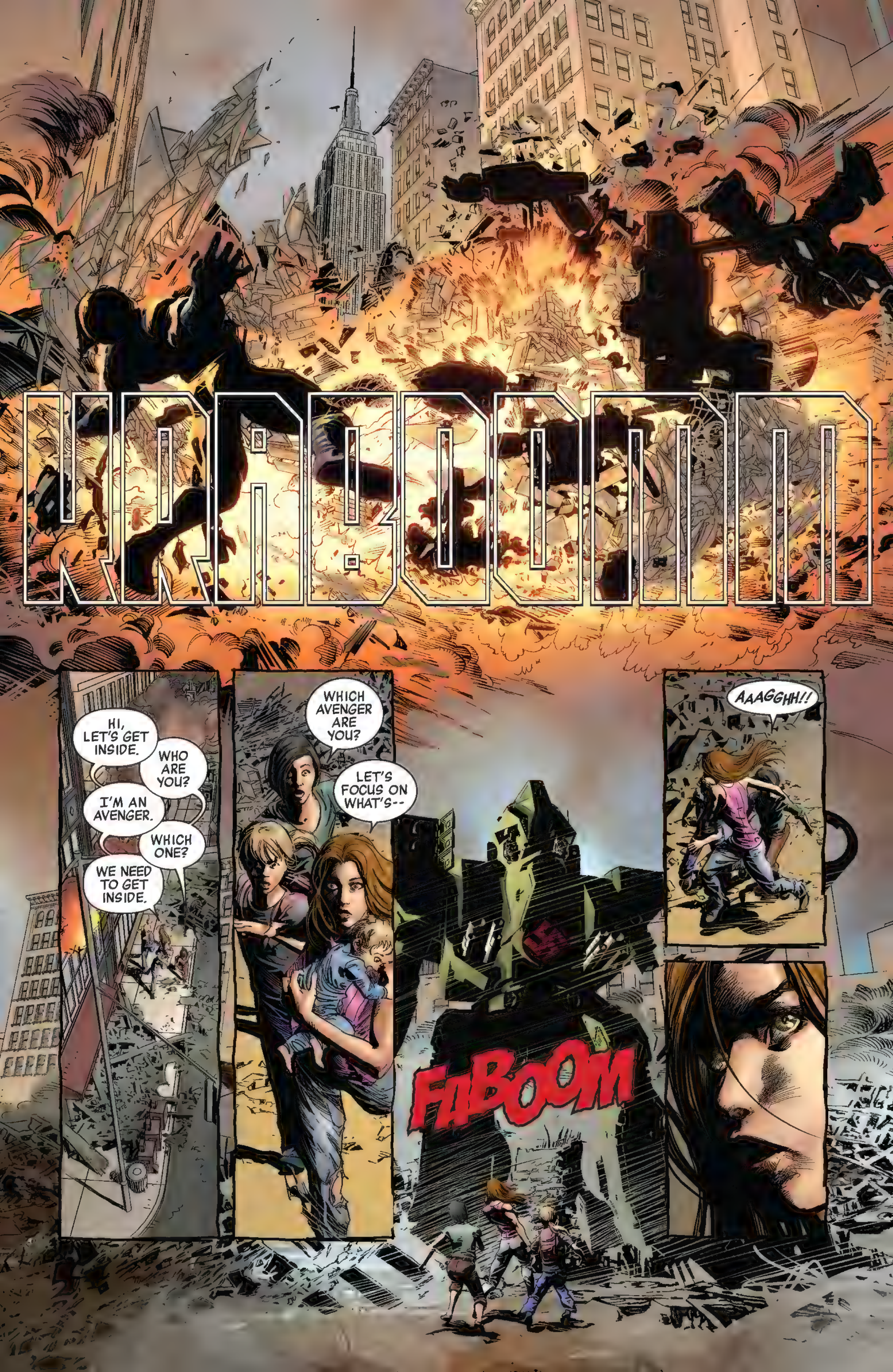

WHAT DO WE DO?
WHERE DO WE START?
FIND THE ONE CLOSEST TO YOU AND RIP IT IN HALF.
OKAY, YOU GO FIR--
BOOM
OW.

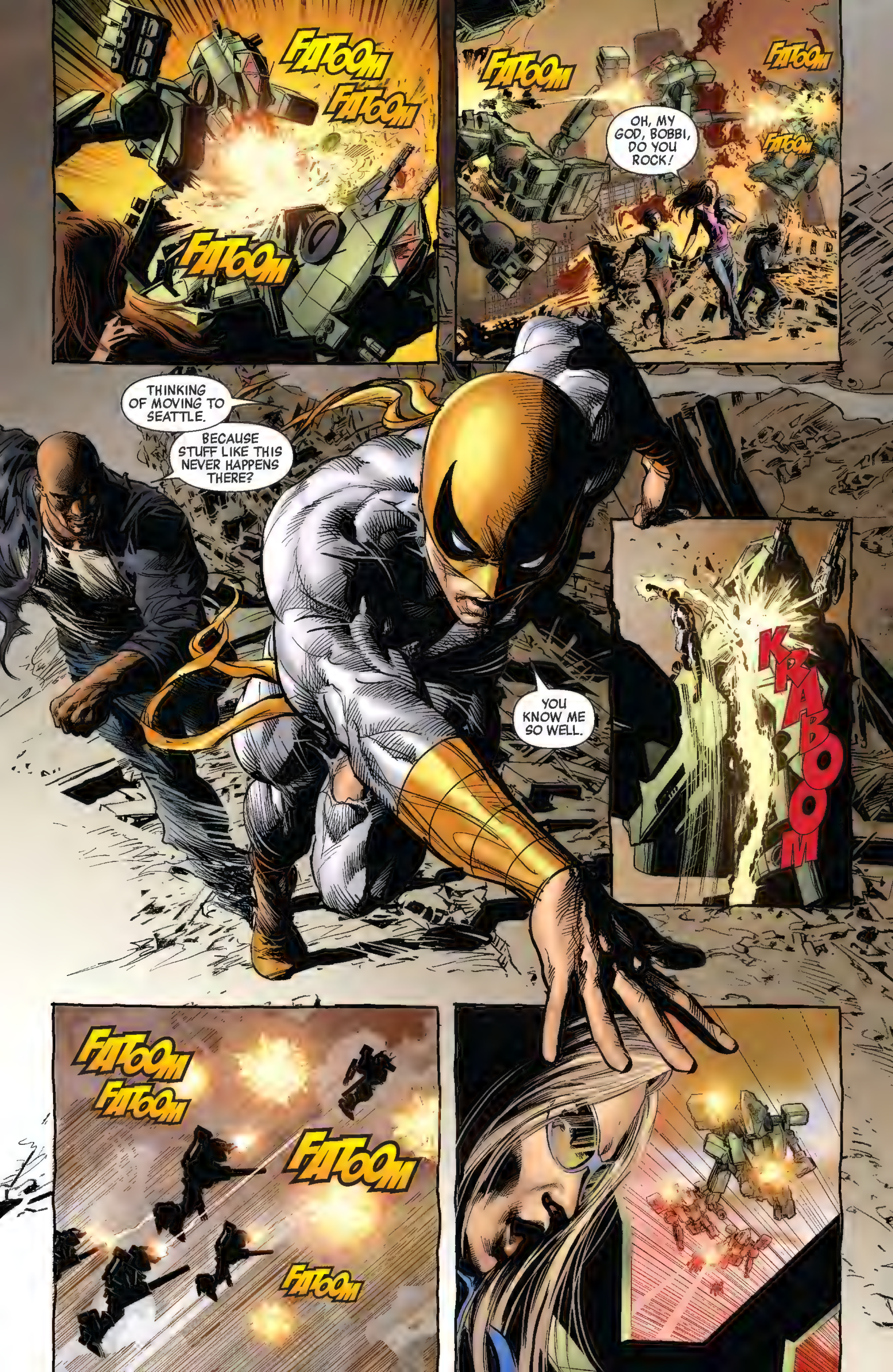

SCABAM
SCABAM

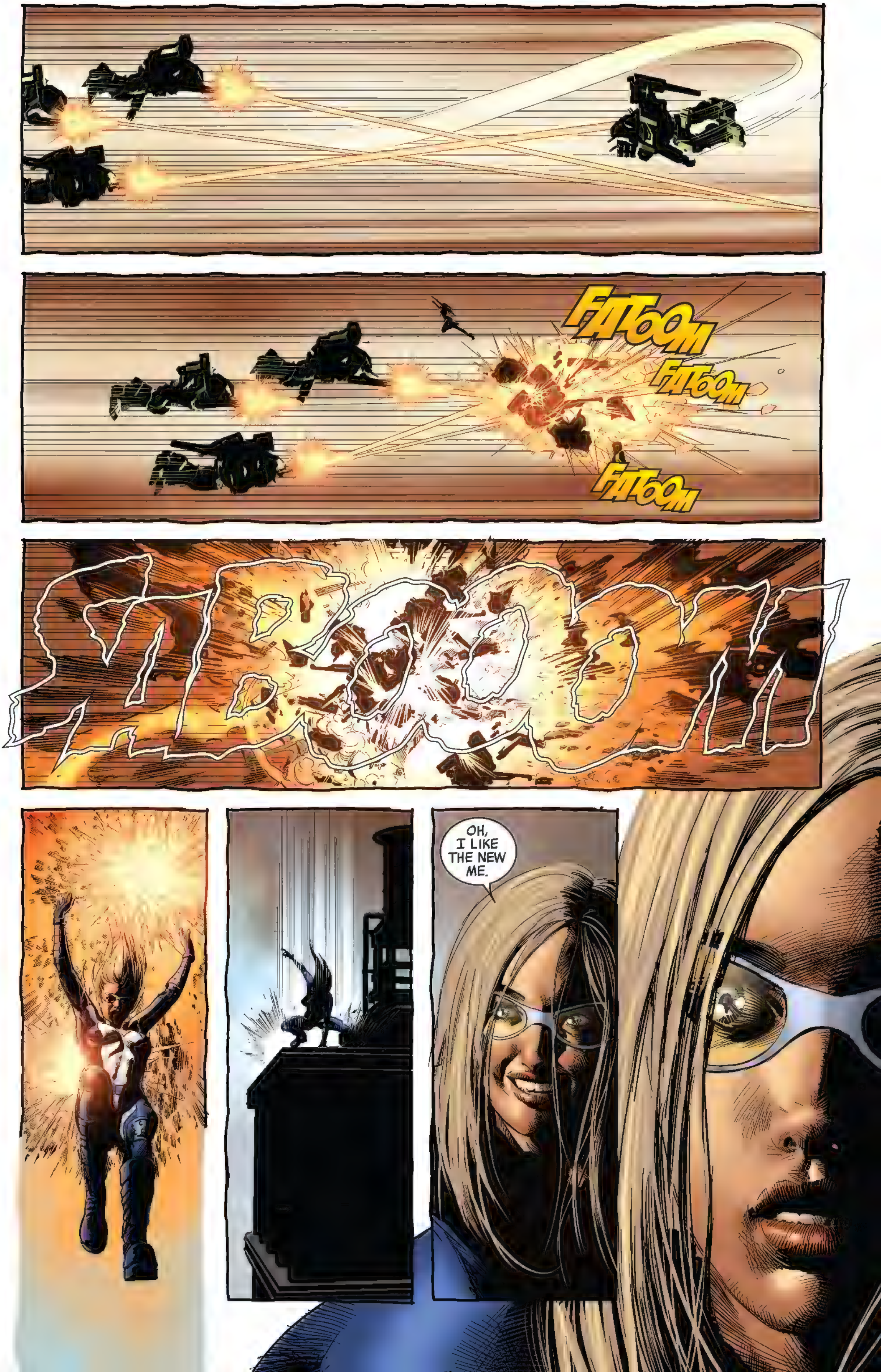

THE RED SKULL HAD A DAUGHTER.
WHO KNEW?
THE WORST NAZI IN THE WORLD FOUND A LADY TO HAVE A BABY WITH.
HER NAME IS SIN AND, BELIEVE IT OR NOT, SHE IS WORSE THAN HER DAD.
SHE'S WORSE THAN THE WORST NAZI EVER.
WELL SHE *WANTED* TO BE. SO WHAT BETTER WAY THAN UNLEASHING HELL ON EARTH?
I DIDN'T KNOW ALL THE DETAILS AT THE TIME, NONE OF US DID.
ALL WE KNEW WAS CRAZY NAZI CHICK...
SOMETHING ABOUT EVIL ENCHANTED HAMMERS...
AND SOME INSANE POWER SOURCE FOR ALL HER NAZI WEAPONS AND GEAR.
THE HIGHLIGHTS OF WHICH WERE THESE POWERED-UP NAZI EXOSUITED WAR MACHINES THAT WERE HAMMERING DOWN ON NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON AND WHO KNOWS WHERE ELSE.
NEW YORK IS THE HOME OF THE AVENGERS. AVENGERS MANSION AND AVENGERS TOWER.
THIS IS OUR HOME.
AND I NEEDED SOMETHING TO HIT.
I NEEDED TO FIND OUT HOW AWESOME THIS NEW ME WAS.
SOUPED-UP NAZI ROBOTS?
PERFECT.

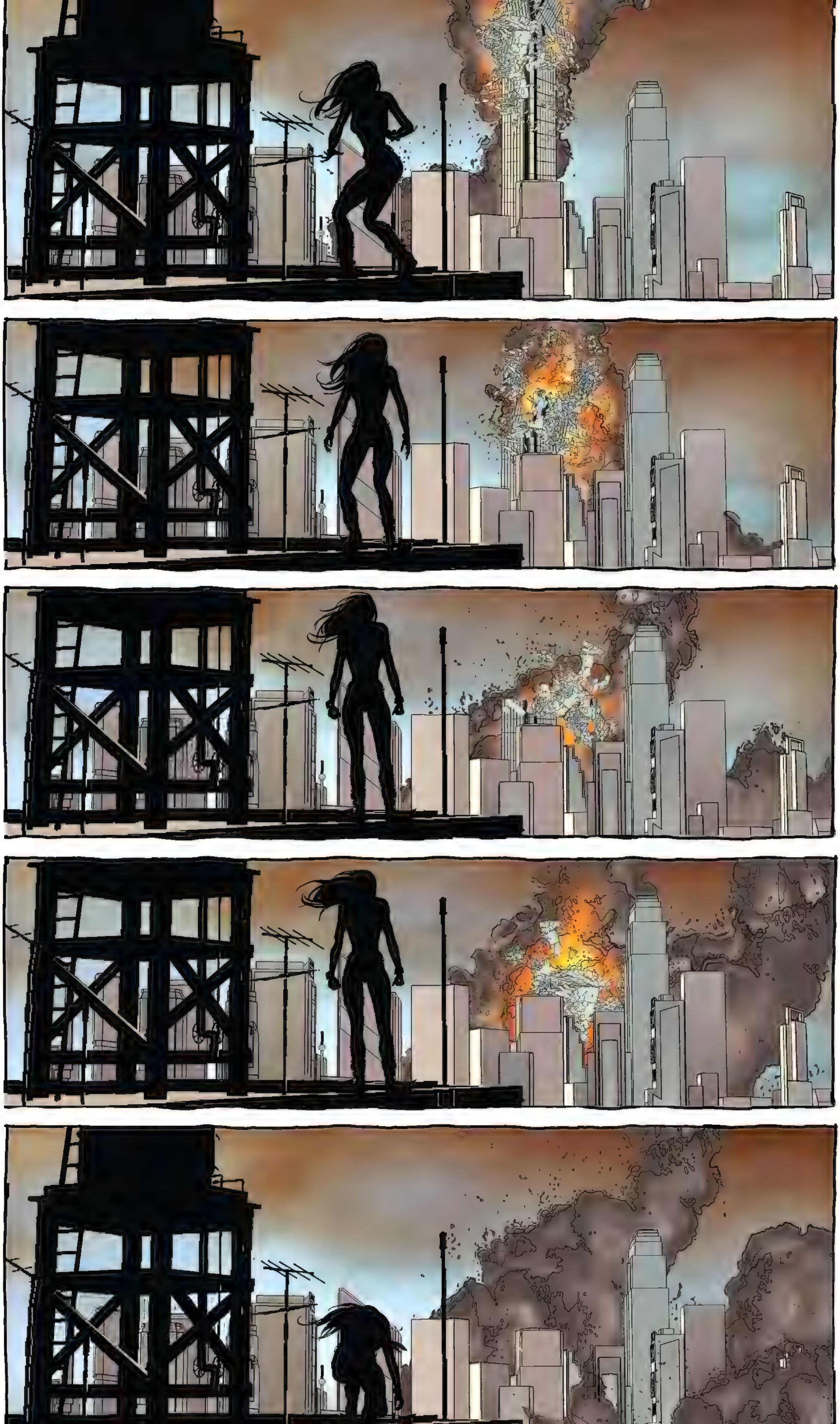

WELL, THIS IS JUST TOO #@$% MUCH.
LET'S SPREAD OUT AND GET CIVVIES THE HELL OUT OF THE WAY.
FOR REAL.
HOW COME THEY CAN'T FIGURE OUT TO DO THAT ON THEIR OWN?
CAGE, THROW ME.

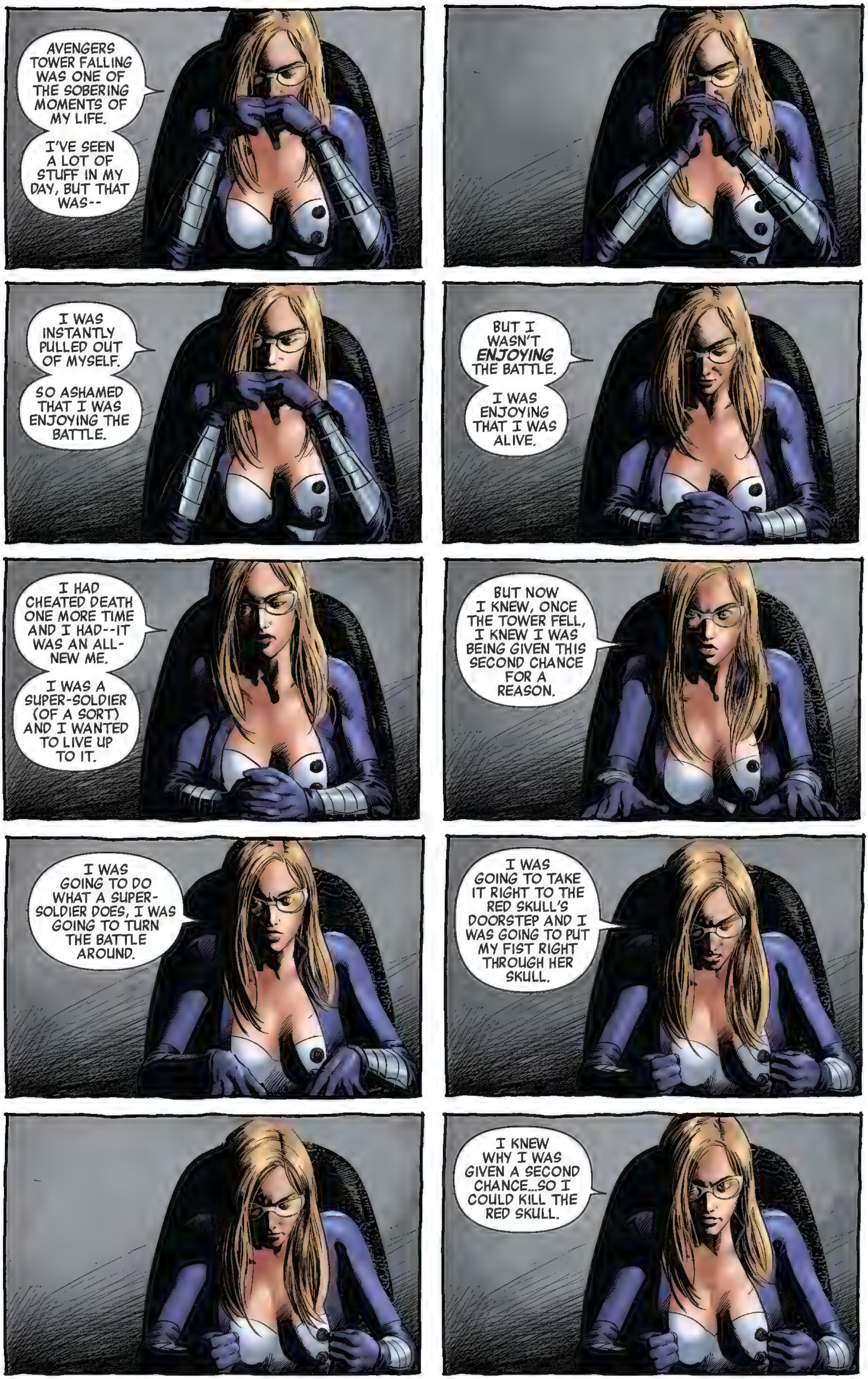

FATOOM
FATOOM
FATOOM
FATOOM
FATOOM
FATOOM
FATOOM
SLICCEE
SLICCEE
HEIL THIS, BUB.
FABOOM


KRA!BOOMM
HI, LET'S GET INSIDE.
WHO ARE YOU?
I'M AN AVENGER.
WHICH ONE?
WE NEED TO GET INSIDE.
WHICH AVENGER ARE YOU?
LET'S FOCUS ON WHAT'S--
AAAGGHH!!
FABOOM

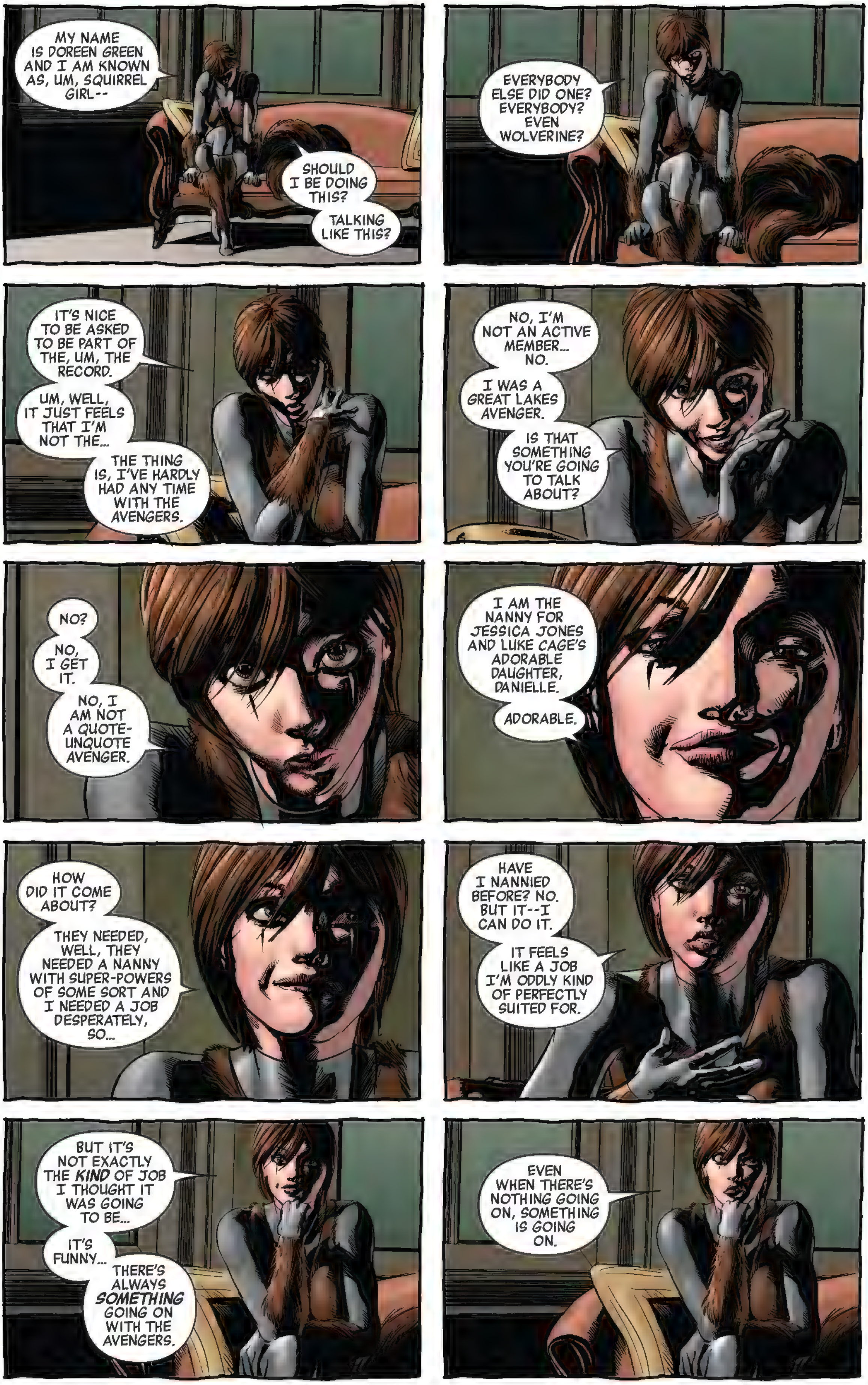

FATOOM
FATOOM
FATOOM
FATOOM
FATOOM
OH, MY GOD, BOBBI, DO YOU ROCK!
FATOOM
THINKING OF MOVING TO SEATTLE.
BECAUSE STUFF LIKE THIS NEVER HAPPENS THERE?
YOU KNOW ME SO WELL.
KRABOOM
FATOOM
FATOOM
FATOOM
FATOOM

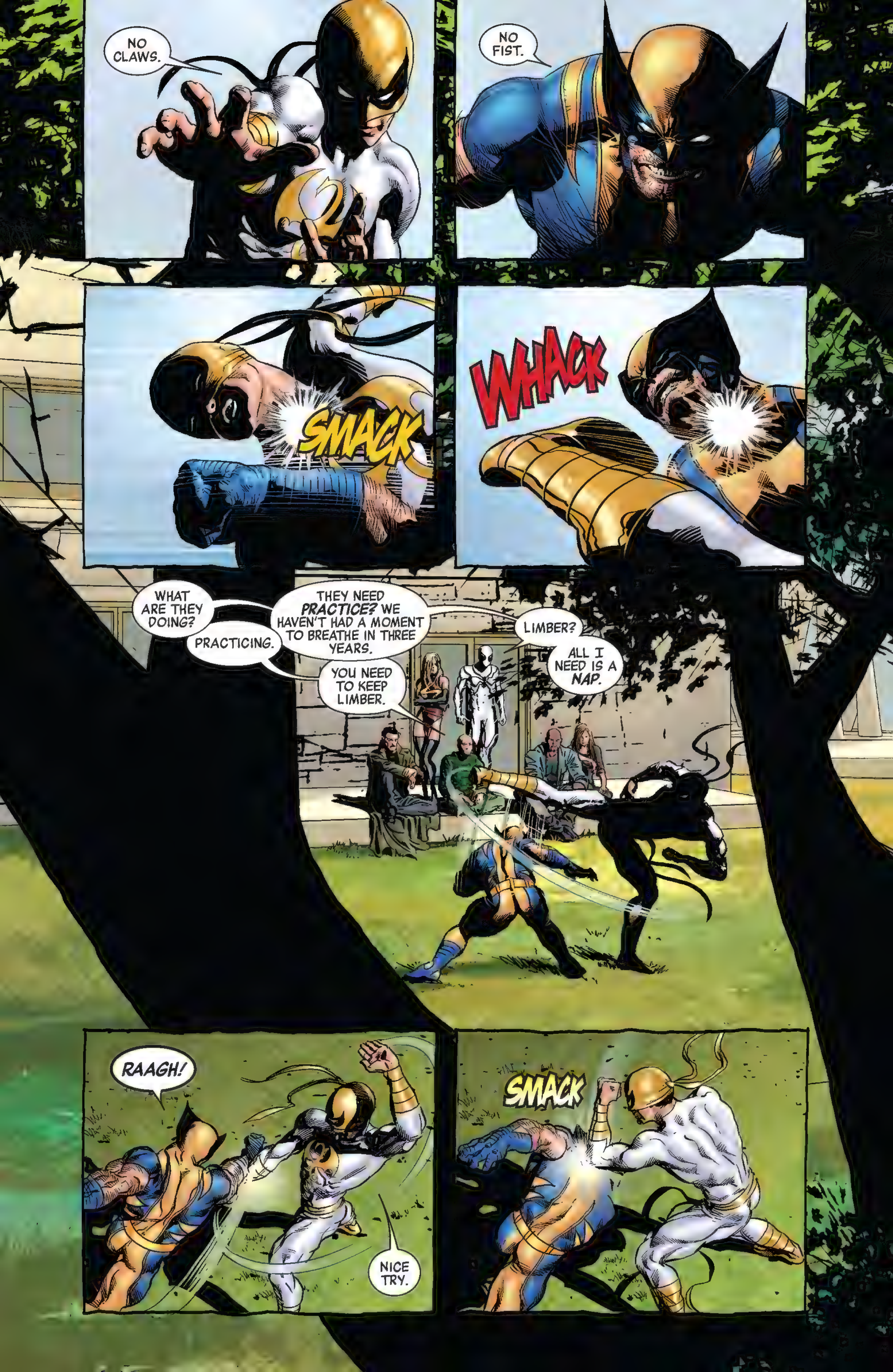

FATOOM
FATOOM
FATOOM
KBOOOM
OH, I LIKE THE NEW ME.

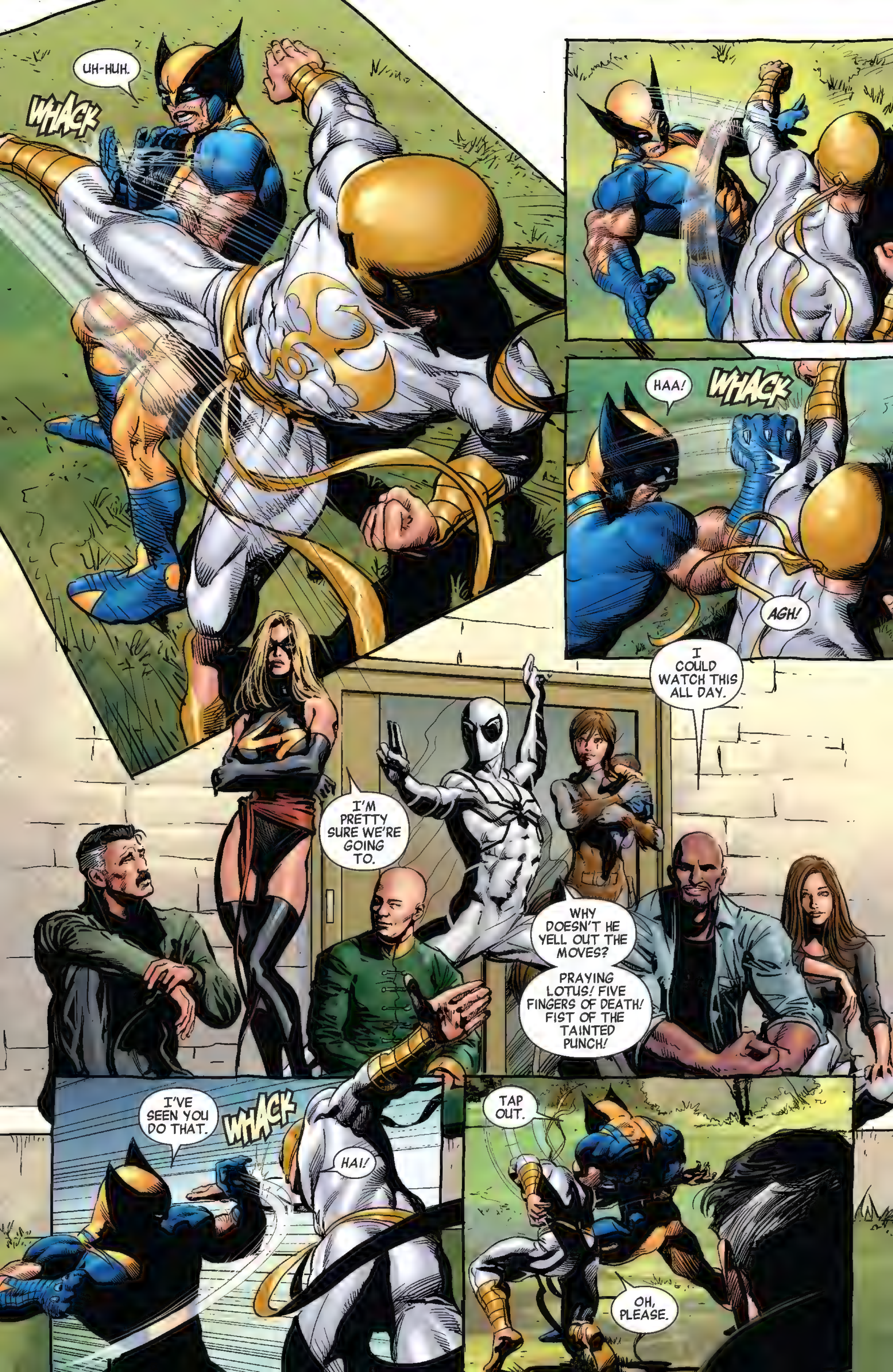


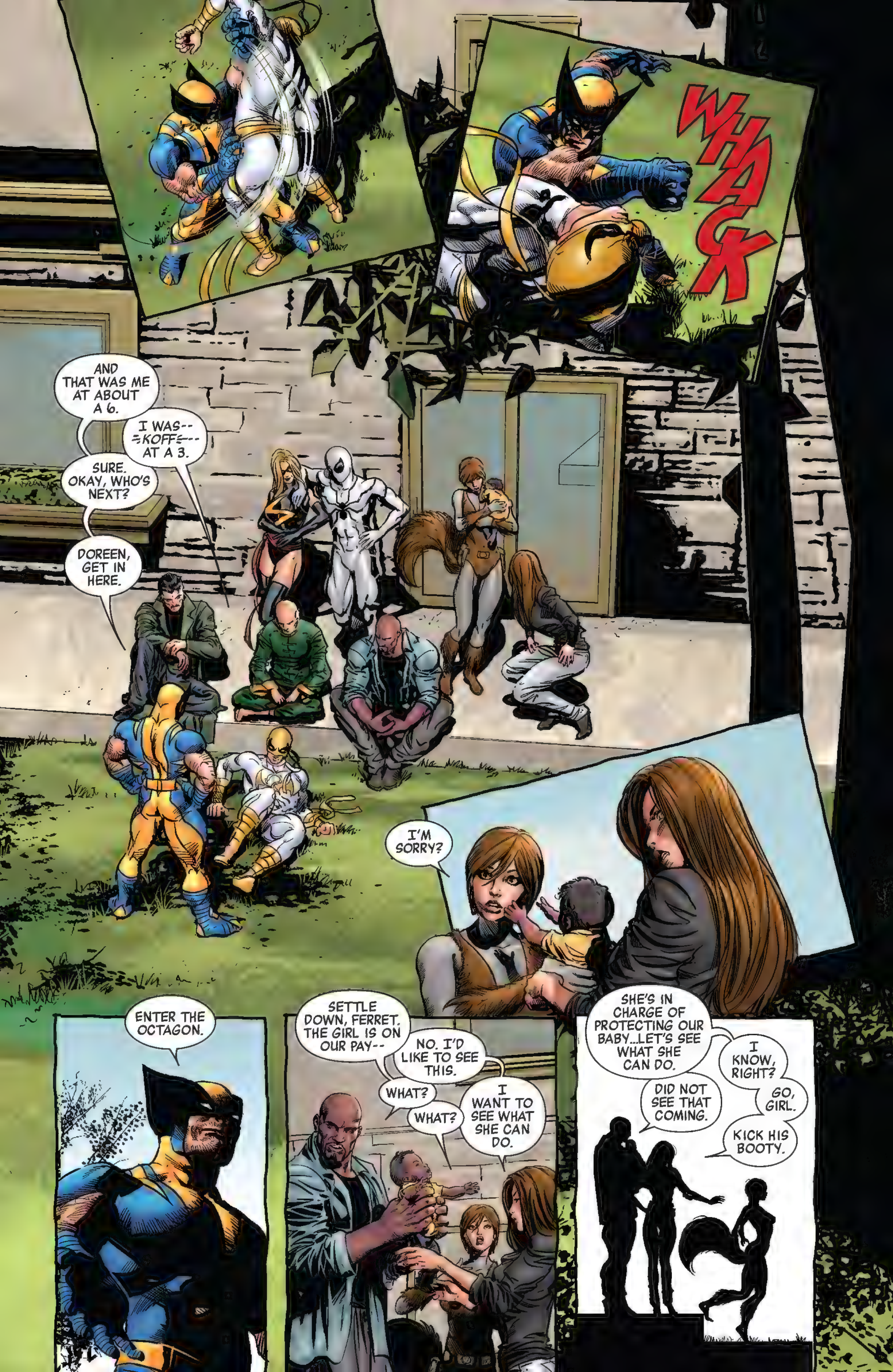

AVENGERS TOWER FALLING WAS ONE OF THE SOBERING MOMENTS OF MY LIFE.
I'VE SEEN A LOT OF STUFF IN MY DAY, BUT THAT WAS--
I WAS INSTANTLY PULLED OUT OF MYSELF.
SO ASHAMED THAT I WAS ENJOYING THE BATTLE.
BUT I WASN'T *ENJOYING* THE BATTLE.
I WAS ENJOYING THAT I WAS ALIVE.
I HAD CHEATED DEATH ONE MORE TIME AND I HAD--IT WAS AN ALL-NEW ME.
I WAS A SUPER-SOLDIER (OF A SORT) AND I WANTED TO LIVE UP TO IT.
BUT NOW I KNEW, ONCE THE TOWER FELL, I KNEW I WAS BEING GIVEN THIS SECOND CHANCE FOR A REASON.
I WAS GOING TO DO WHAT A SUPER-SOLDIER DOES, I WAS GOING TO TURN THE BATTLE AROUND.
I WAS GOING TO TAKE IT RIGHT TO THE RED SKULL'S DOORSTEP AND I WAS GOING TO PUT MY FIST RIGHT THROUGH HER SKULL.
I KNEW WHY I WAS GIVEN A SECOND CHANCE...SO I COULD KILL THE RED SKULL.

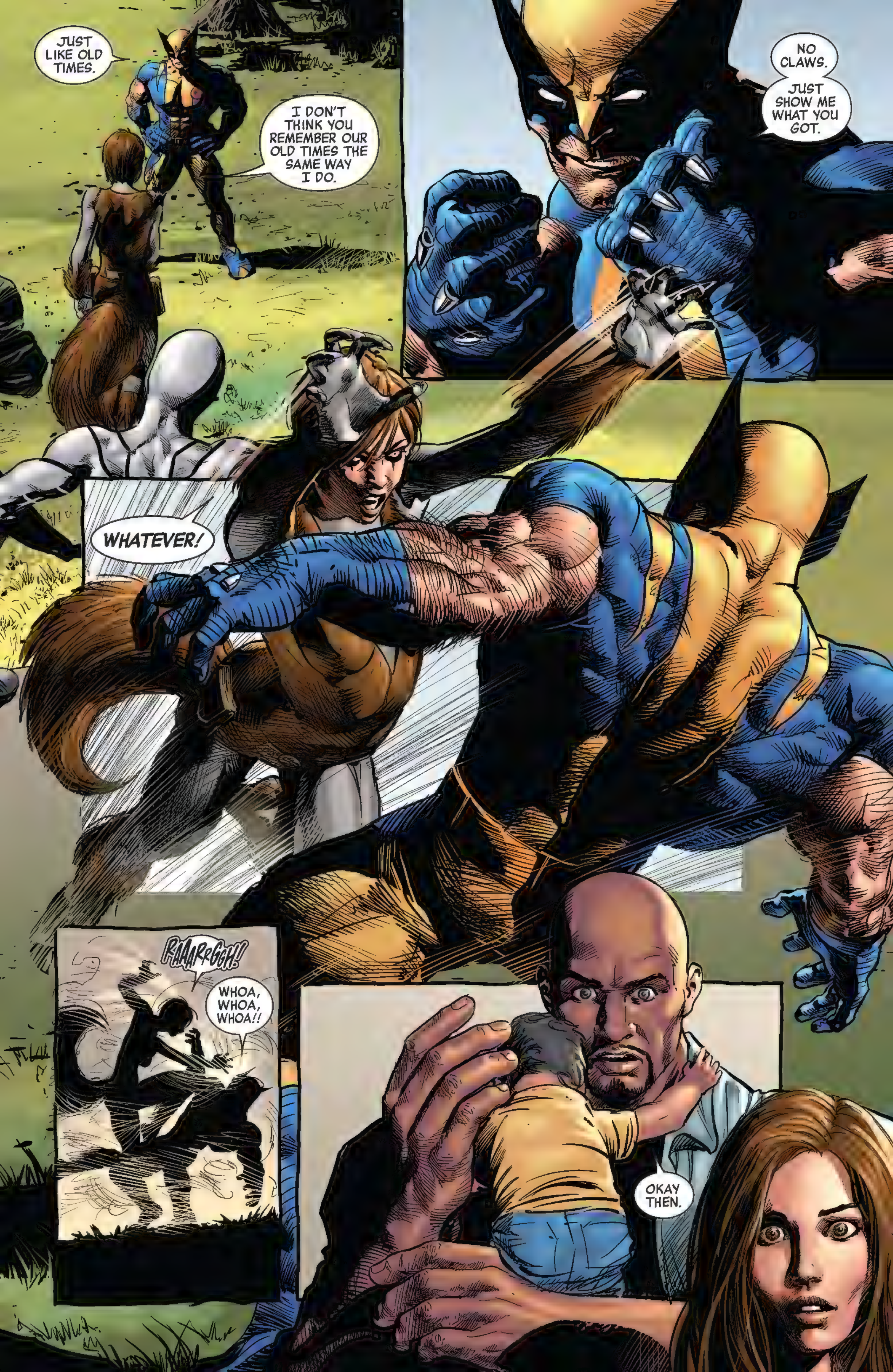
NEW AVENGERS #15

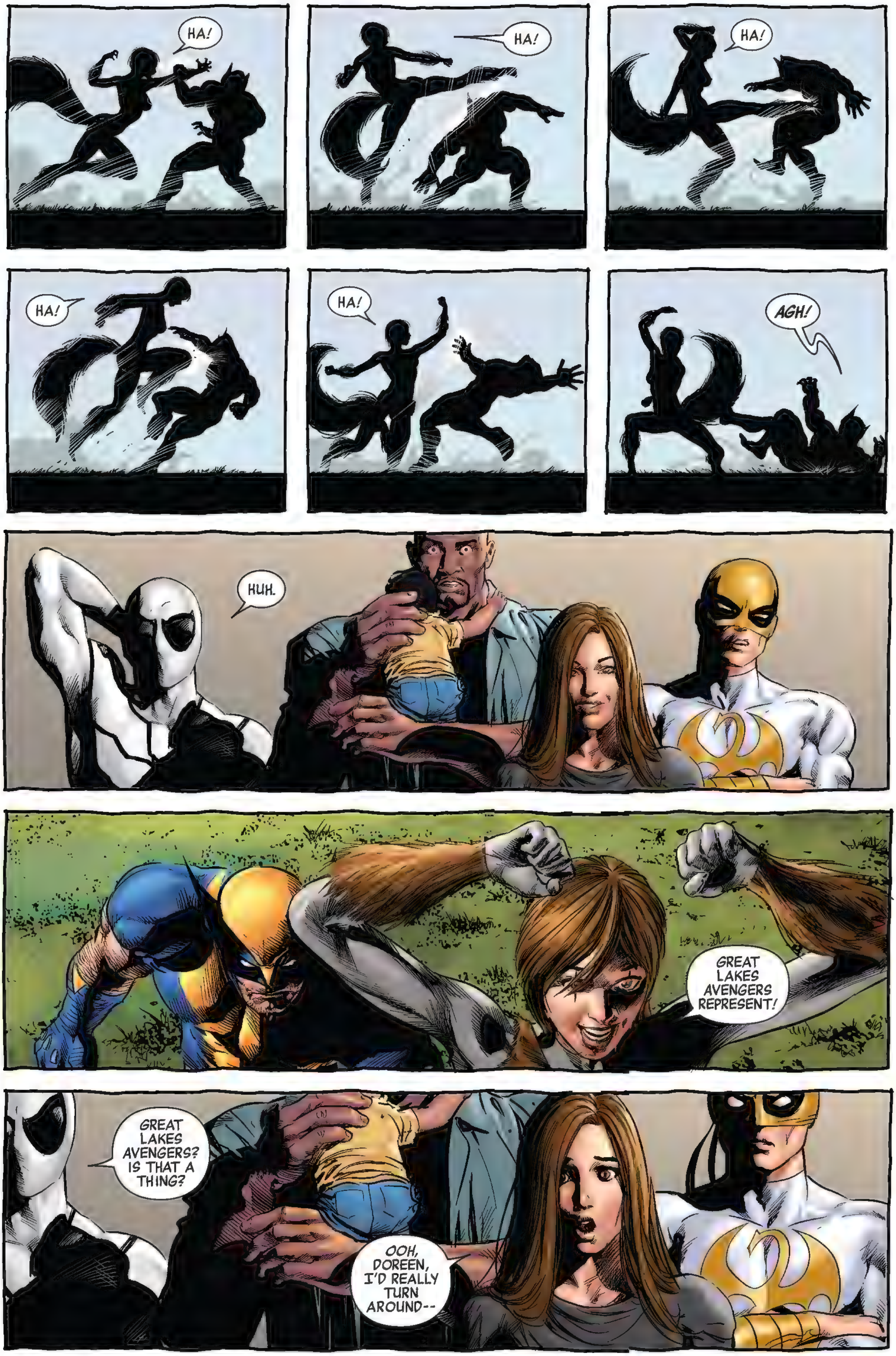

MY NAME IS DOREEN GREEN AND I AM KNOWN AS, UM, SQUIRREL GIRL--
SHOULD I BE DOING THIS?
TALKING LIKE THIS?
EVERYBODY ELSE DID ONE? EVERYBODY? EVEN WOLVERINE?
IT'S NICE TO BE ASKED TO BE PART OF THE, UM, THE RECORD.
UM, WELL, IT JUST FEELS THAT I'M NOT THE...
THE THING IS, I'VE HARDLY HAD ANY TIME WITH THE AVENGERS.
NO, I'M NOT AN ACTIVE MEMBER... NO.
I WAS A GREAT LAKES AVENGER.
IS THAT SOMETHING YOU'RE GOING TO TALK ABOUT?
NO?
NO, I GET IT.
NO, I AM NOT A QUOTE-UNQUOTE AVENGER.
I AM THE NANNY FOR JESSICA JONES AND LUKE CAGE'S ADORABLE DAUGHTER, DANIELLE.
ADORABLE.
HOW DID IT COME ABOUT?
THEY NEEDED, WELL, THEY NEEDED A NANNY WITH SUPER-POWERS OF SOME SORT AND I NEEDED A JOB DESPERATELY, SO...
HAVE I NANNIED BEFORE? NO. BUT IT--I CAN DO IT.
IT FEELS LIKE A JOB I'M ODDLY KIND OF PERFECTLY SUITED FOR.
BUT IT'S NOT EXACTLY THE KIND OF JOB I THOUGHT IT WAS GOING TO BE...
IT'S FUNNY...
THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING GOING ON WITH THE AVENGERS.
EVEN WHEN THERE'S NOTHING GOING ON, SOMETHING IS GOING ON.

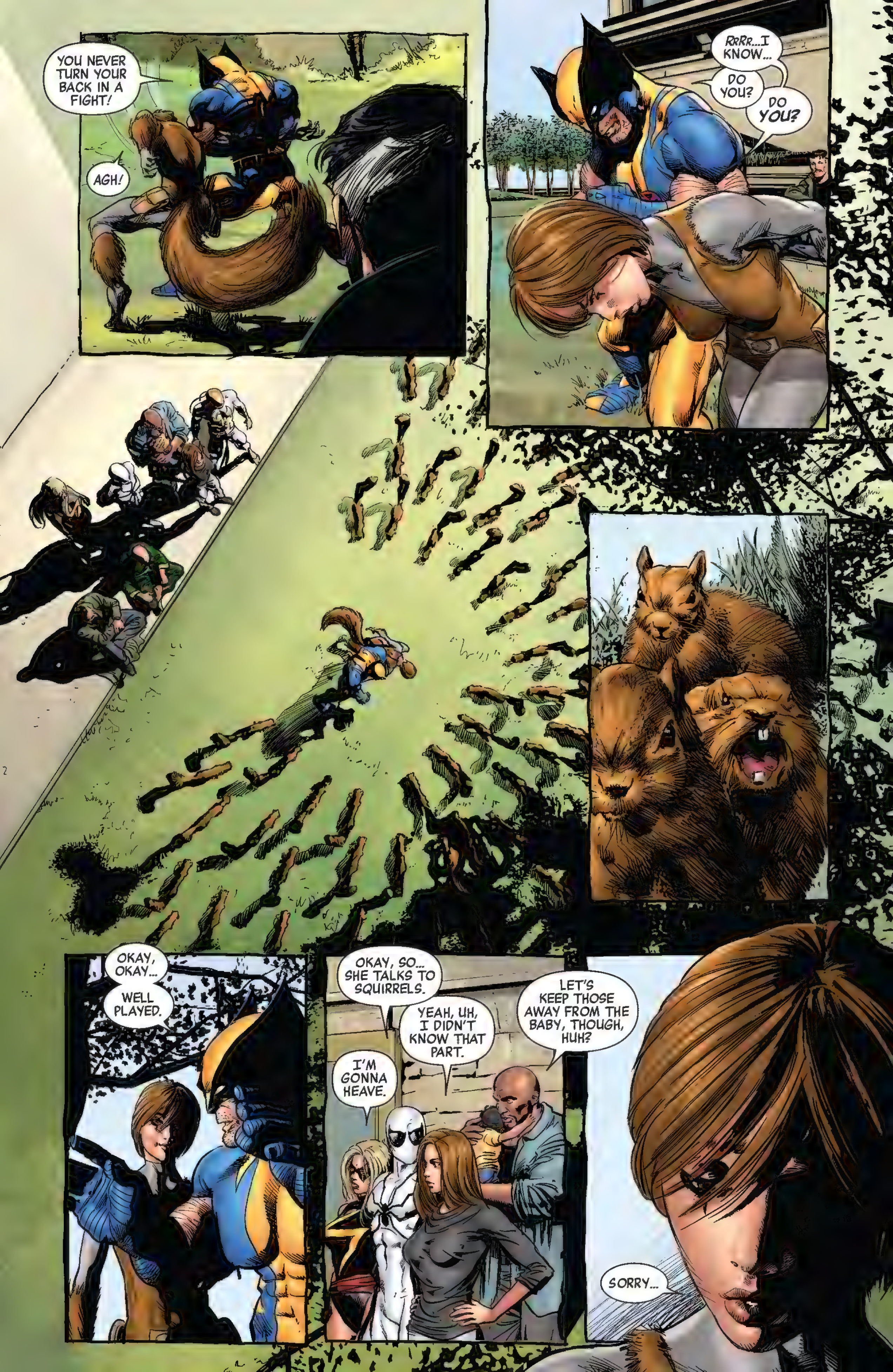

NO CLAWS.
NO FIST.
SMACK
WHACK
WHAT ARE THEY DOING?
PRACTICING.
THEY NEED *PRACTICE?* WE HAVEN'T HAD A MOMENT TO BREATHE IN THREE YEARS.
YOU NEED TO KEEP LIMBER.
LIMBER?
ALL I NEED IS A *NAP*.
RAAGH!
NICE TRY.
SMACK

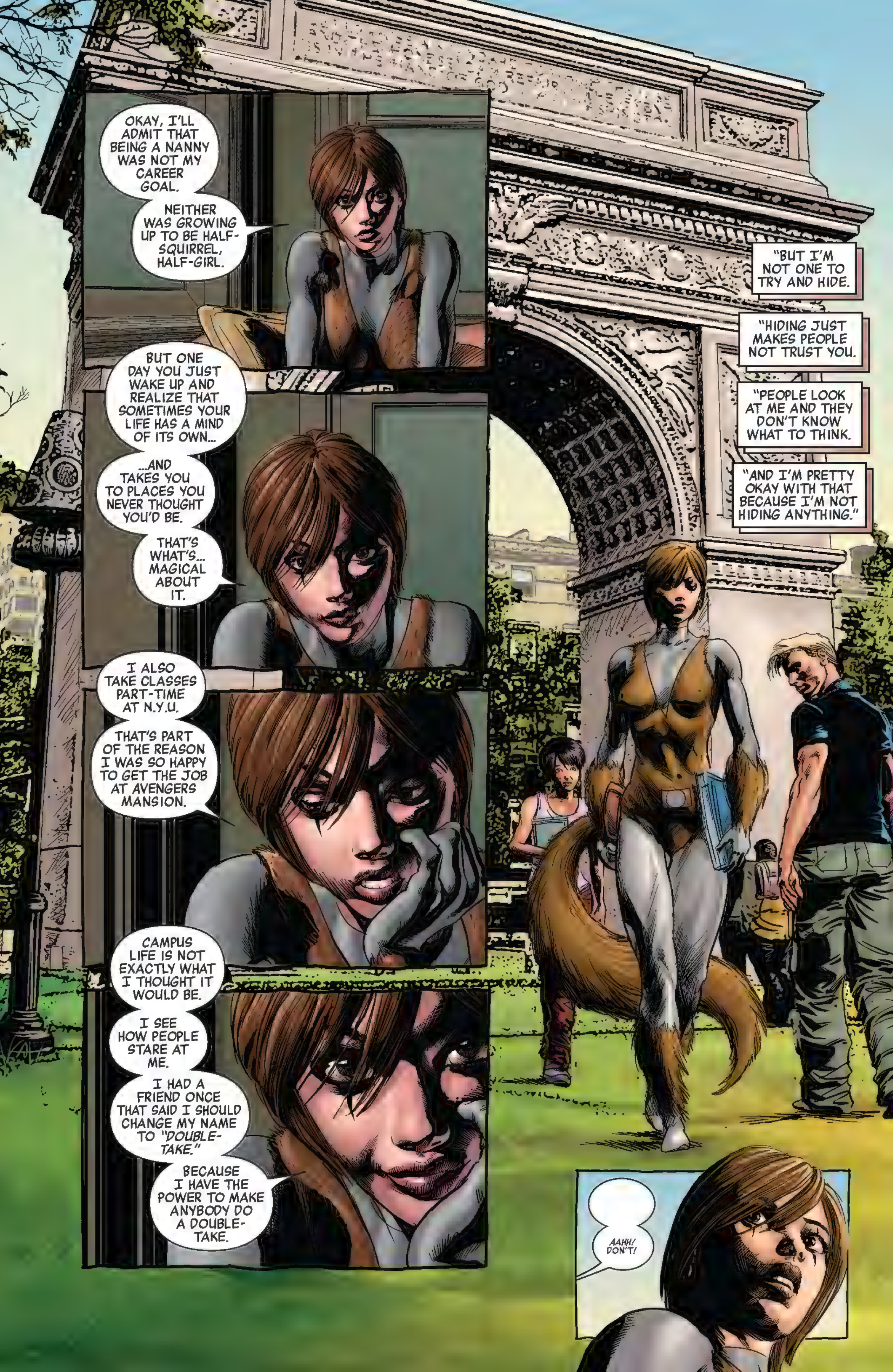

UH-HUH.
WHACK
HAA!
WHACK
AGH!
I COULD WATCH THIS ALL DAY.
I'M PRETTY SURE WE'RE GOING TO.
WHY DOESN'T HE YELL OUT THE MOVES?
PRAYING LOTUS! FIVE FINGERS OF DEATH! FIST OF THE TAINTED PUNCH!
I'VE SEEN YOU DO THAT.
WHACK
HAI!
TAP OUT.
OH, PLEASE.

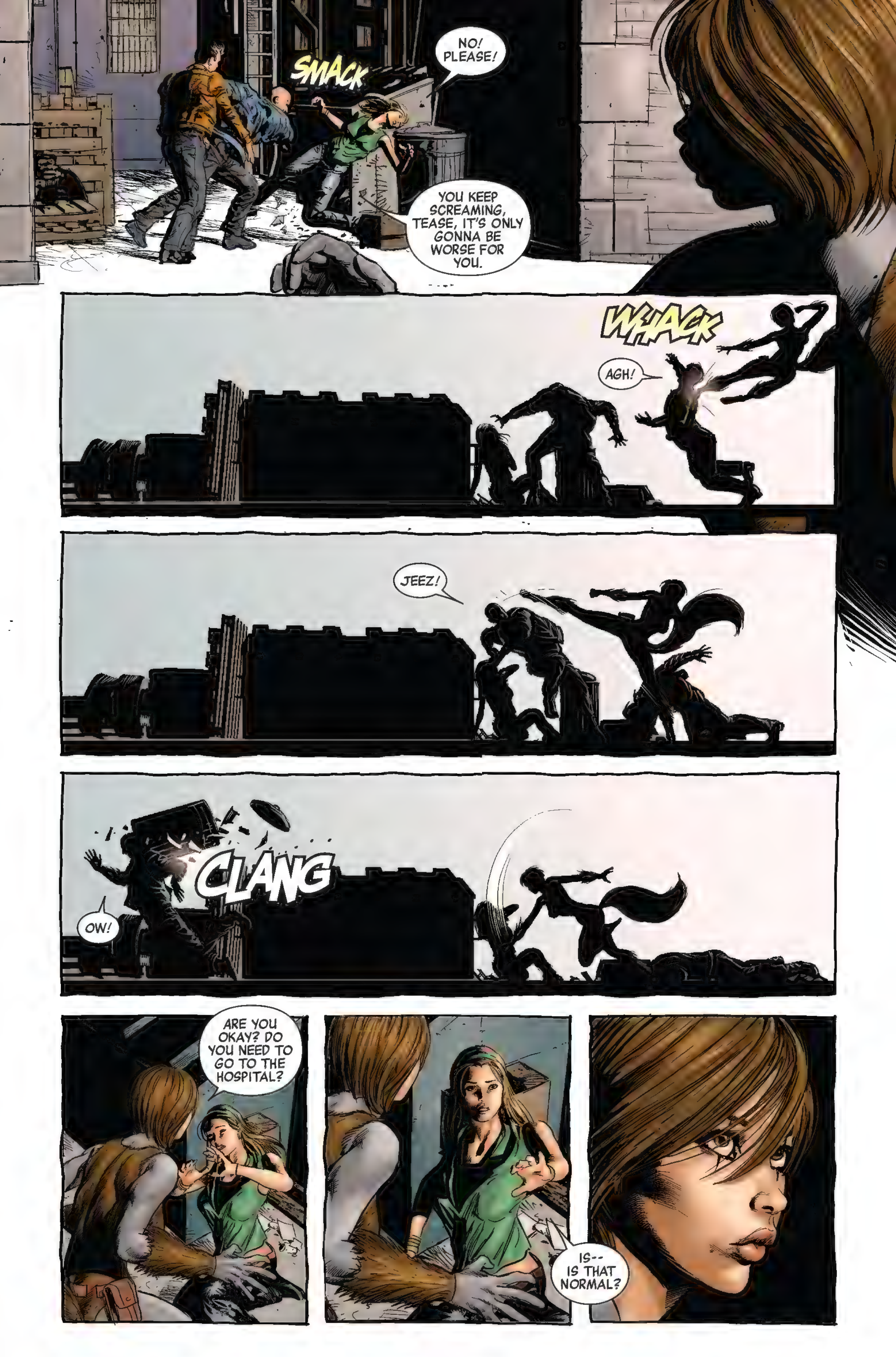

WHACK
AND THAT WAS ME AT ABOUT A 6.
I WAS-- =KOFF=-- AT A 3.
SURE. OKAY, WHO'S NEXT?
DOREEN, GET IN HERE.
I'M SORRY?
ENTER THE OCTAGON.
SETTLE DOWN, FERRET. THE GIRL IS ON OUR PAY--
NO. I'D LIKE TO SEE THIS.
WHAT?
WHAT?
I WANT TO SEE WHAT SHE CAN DO.
SHE'S IN CHARGE OF PROTECTING OUR BABY...LET'S SEE WHAT SHE CAN DO.
DID NOT SEE THAT COMING.
I KNOW, RIGHT?
GO, GIRL.
KICK HIS BOOTY.

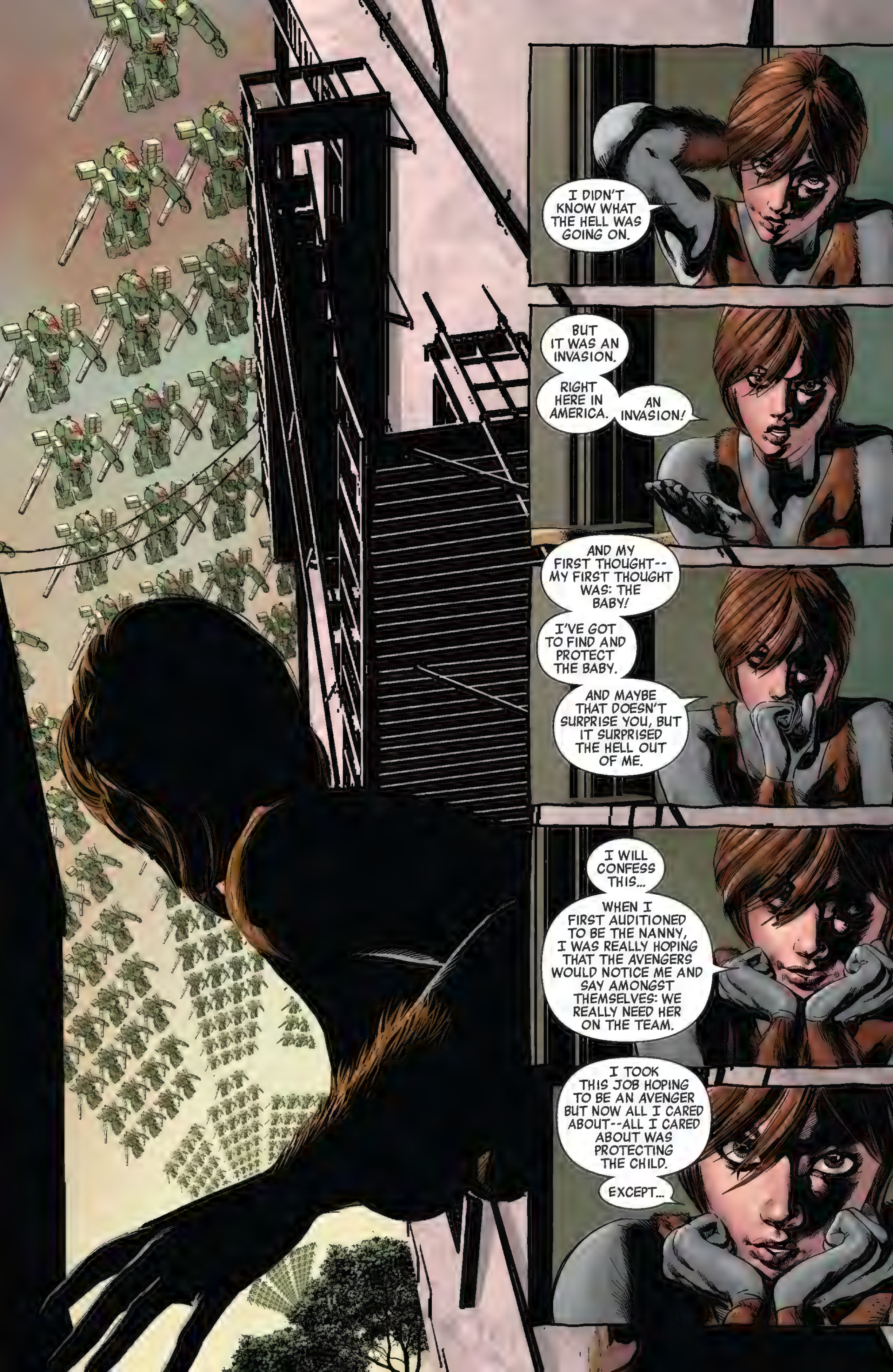

JUST LIKE OLD TIMES.
I DON'T THINK YOU REMEMBER OUR OLD TIMES THE SAME WAY I DO.
NO CLAWS.
JUST SHOW ME WHAT YOU GOT.
WHATEVER!
RAAARRGGH!
WHOA, WHOA, WHOA!!
OKAY THEN.

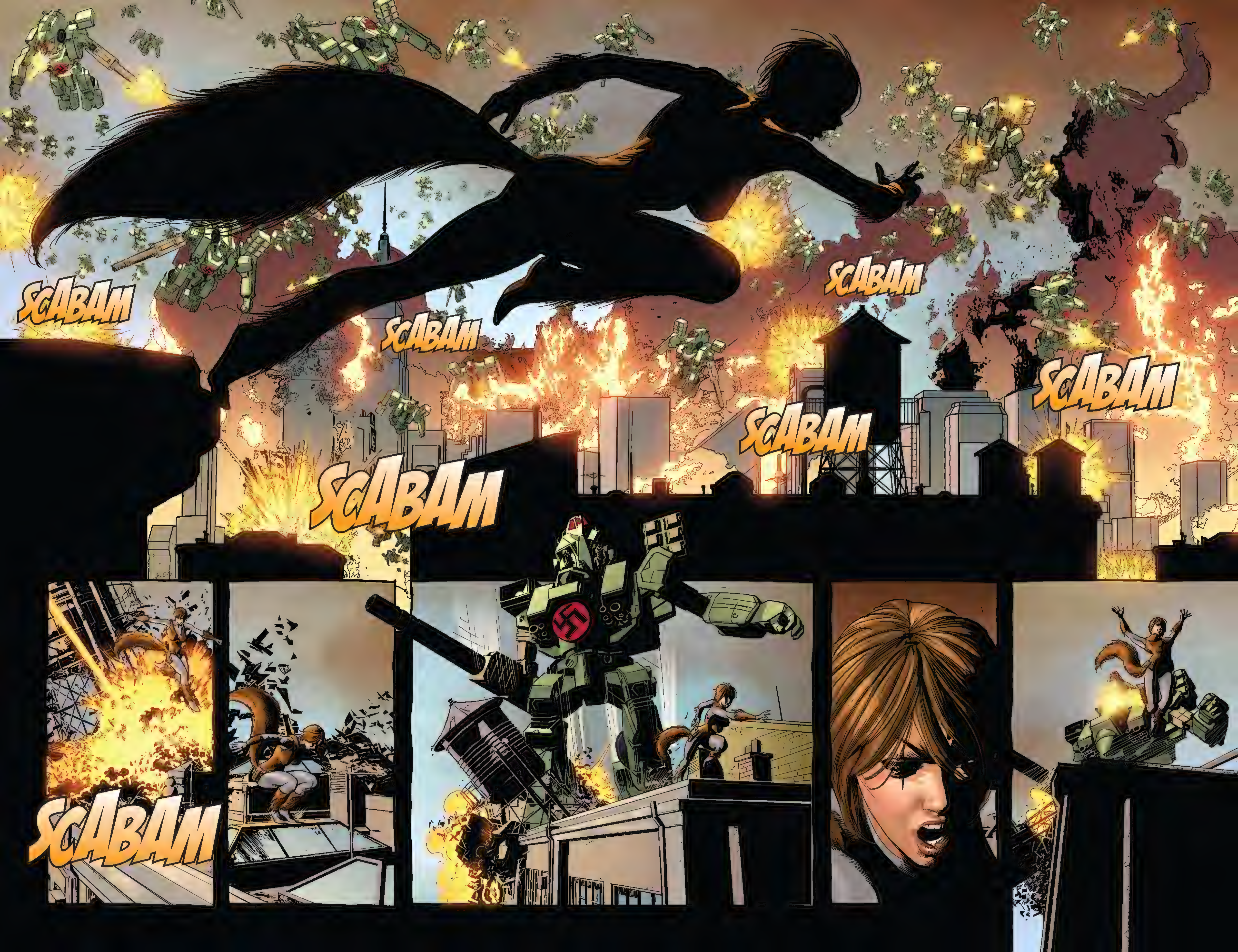

HA!
HA!
HA!
HA!
HA!
AGH!
HUH.
GREAT LAKES AVENGERS REPRESENT!
GREAT LAKES AVENGERS? IS THAT A THING?
OOH, DOREEN, I'D REALLY TURN AROUND--

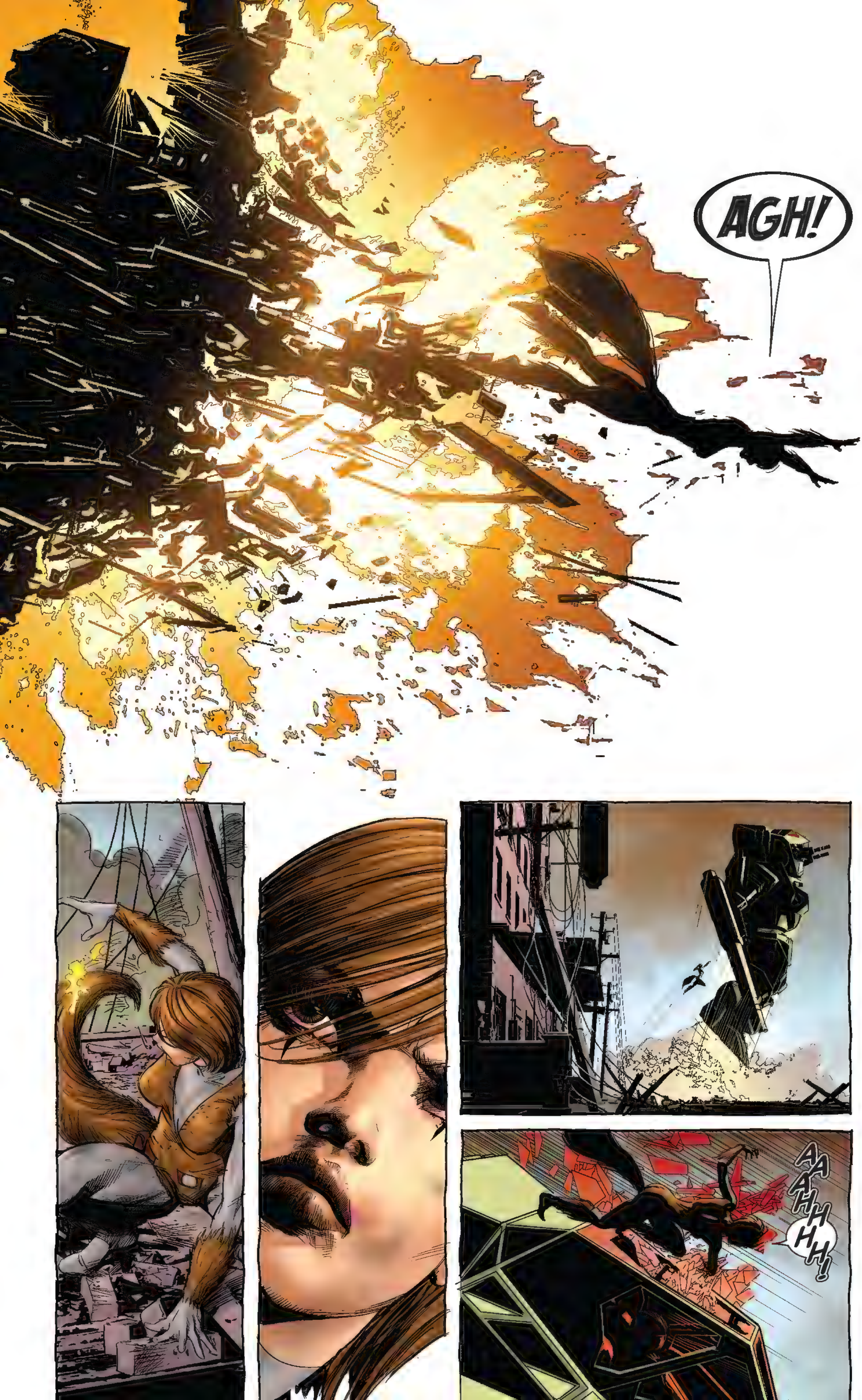

YOU NEVER TURN YOUR BACK IN A FIGHT!
AGH!
RRRR...I KNOW...
DO YOU?
DO *YOU?*
OKAY, OKAY...
WELL PLAYED.
OKAY, SO... SHE TALKS TO SQUIRRELS.
YEAH, UH, I DIDN'T KNOW THAT PART.
I'M GONNA HEAVE.
LET'S KEEP THOSE AWAY FROM THE BABY, THOUGH, HUH?
SORRY...

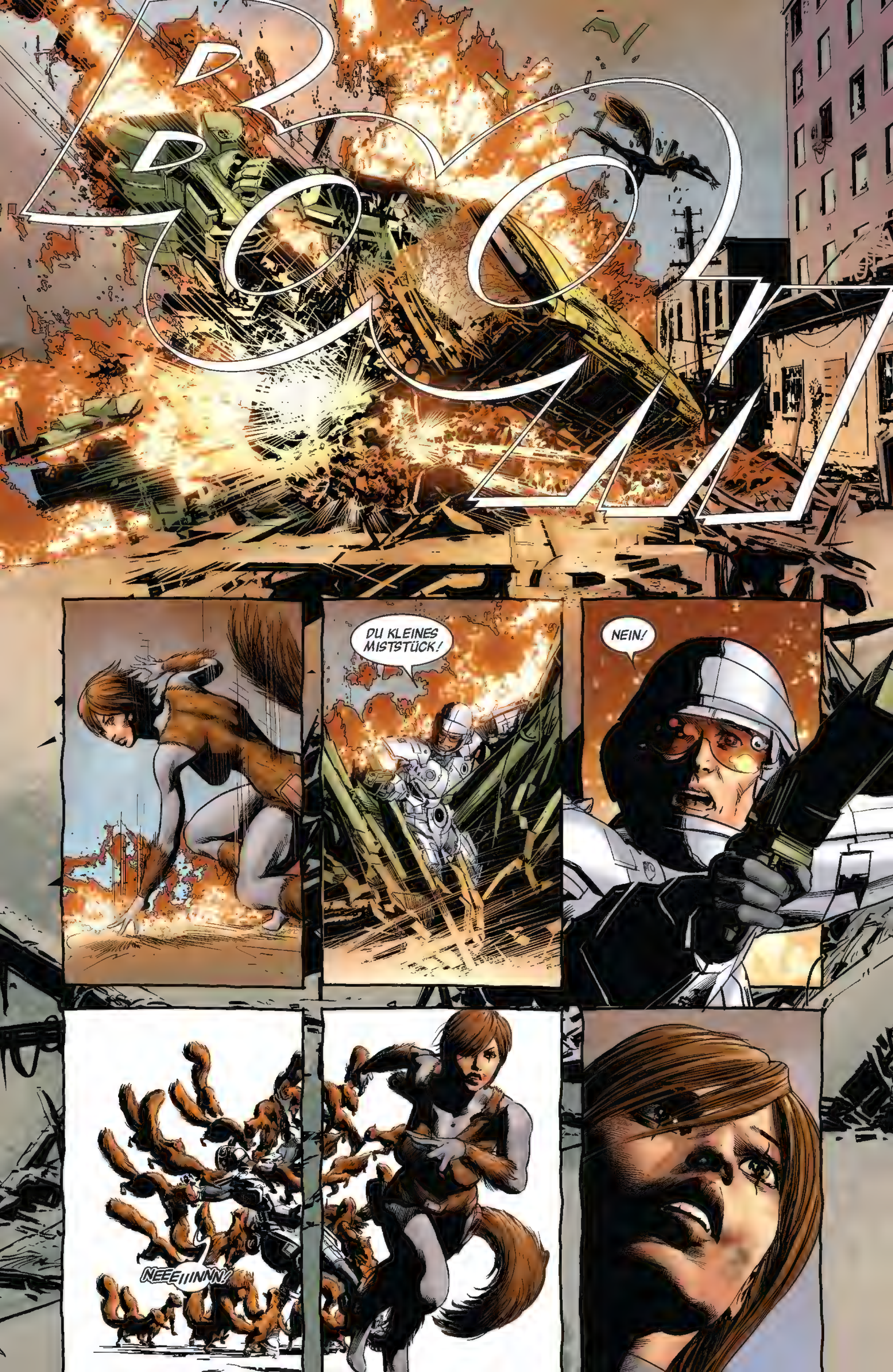

OKAY, I'LL ADMIT THAT BEING A NANNY WAS NOT MY CAREER GOAL.
NEITHER WAS GROWING UP TO BE HALF-SQUIRREL, HALF-GIRL.
BUT ONE DAY YOU JUST WAKE UP AND REALIZE THAT SOMETIMES YOUR LIFE HAS A MIND OF ITS OWN...
...AND TAKES YOU TO PLACES YOU NEVER THOUGHT YOU'D BE.
THAT'S WHAT'S... MAGICAL ABOUT IT.
I ALSO TAKE CLASSES PART-TIME AT N.Y.U.
THAT'S PART OF THE REASON I WAS SO HAPPY TO GET THE JOB AT AVENGERS MANSION.
CAMPUS LIFE IS NOT EXACTLY WHAT I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE.
I SEE HOW PEOPLE STARE AT ME.
I HAD A FRIEND ONCE THAT SAID I SHOULD CHANGE MY NAME TO "DOUBLE-TAKE."
BECAUSE I HAVE THE POWER TO MAKE ANYBODY DO A DOUBLE-TAKE.
"BUT I'M NOT ONE TO TRY AND HIDE.
"HIDING JUST MAKES PEOPLE NOT TRUST YOU.
"PEOPLE LOOK AT ME AND THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK.
"AND I'M PRETTY OKAY WITH THAT BECAUSE I'M NOT HIDING ANYTHING."
AAHH! DON'T!

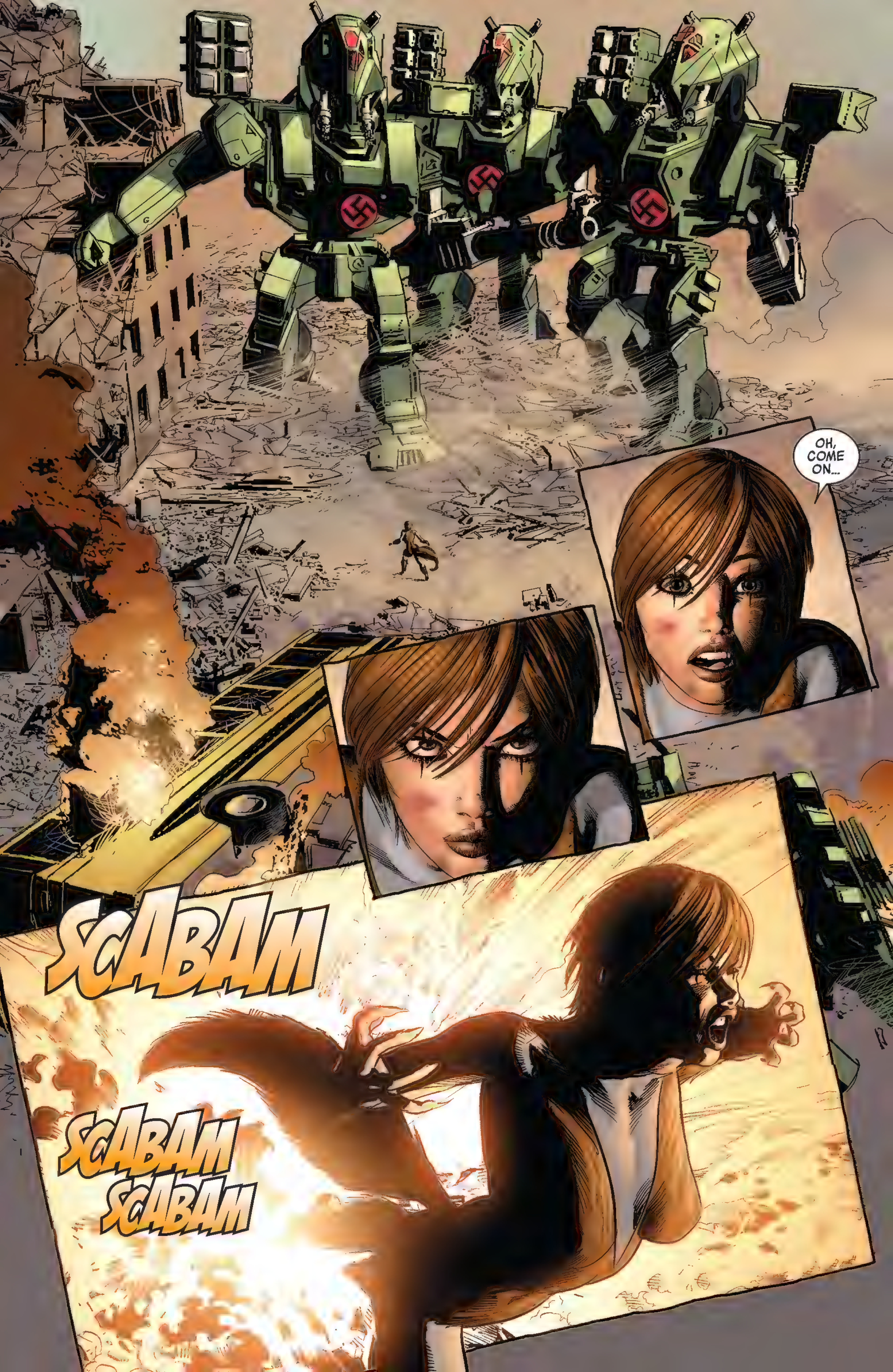

SMACK
NO! PLEASE!
YOU KEEP SCREAMING, TEASE, IT'S ONLY GONNA BE WORSE FOR YOU.
WHACK
AGH!
JEEZ!
CLANG
OW!
ARE YOU OKAY? DO YOU NEED TO GO TO THE HOSPITAL?
IS-- IS THAT NORMAL?

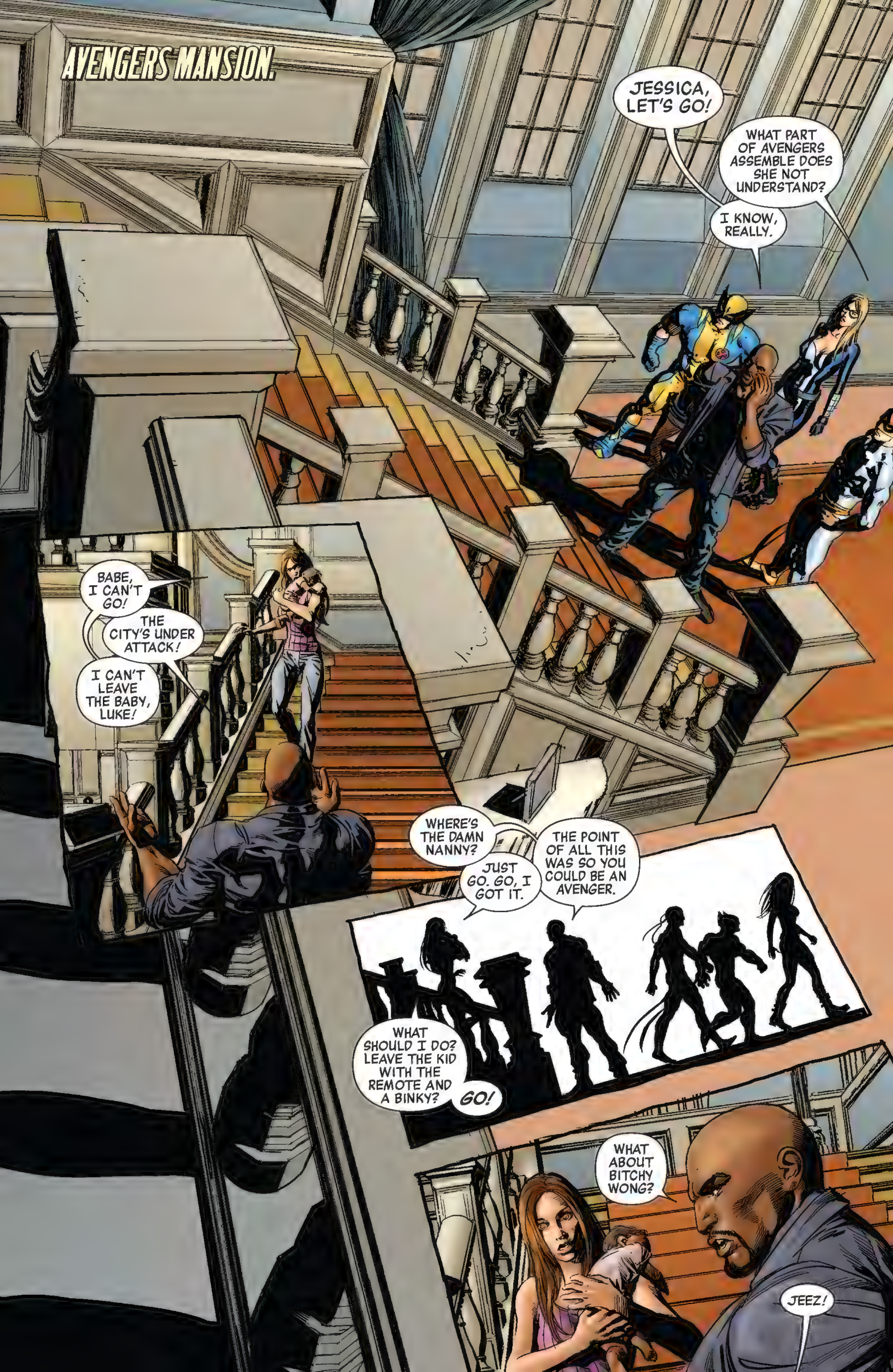

I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL WAS GOING ON.
BUT IT WAS AN INVASION.
RIGHT HERE IN AMERICA.
AN INVASION!
AND MY FIRST THOUGHT-- MY FIRST THOUGHT WAS: THE BABY!
I'VE GOT TO FIND AND PROTECT THE BABY.
AND MAYBE THAT DOESN'T SURPRISE YOU, BUT IT SURPRISED THE HELL OUT OF ME.
I WILL CONFESS THIS...
WHEN I FIRST AUDITIONED TO BE THE NANNY, I WAS REALLY HOPING THAT THE AVENGERS WOULD NOTICE ME AND SAY AMONGST THEMSELVES: WE REALLY NEED HER ON THE TEAM.
I TOOK THIS JOB HOPING TO BE AN AVENGER BUT NOW ALL I CARED ABOUT--ALL I CARED ABOUT WAS PROTECTING THE CHILD.
EXCEPT...

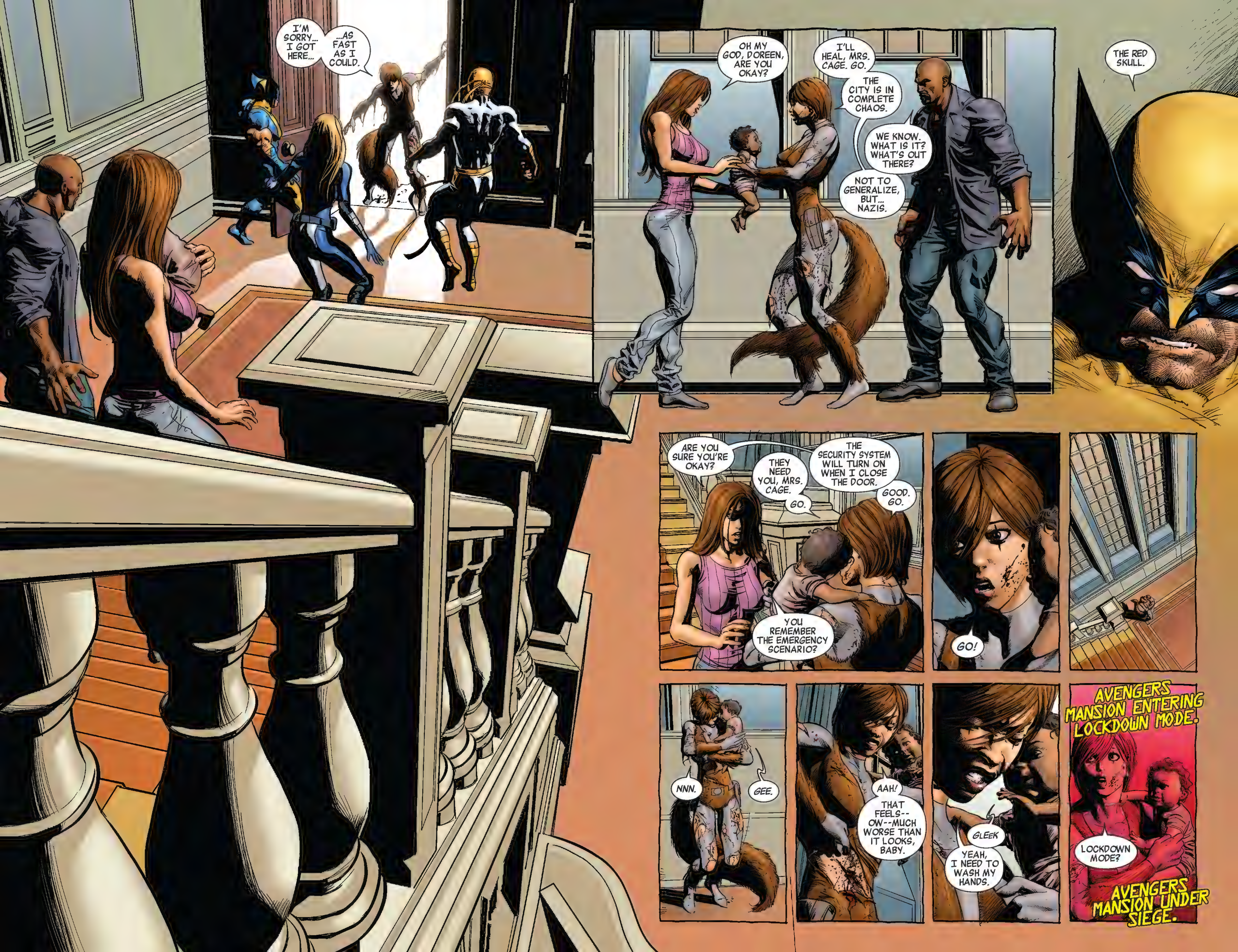

SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM

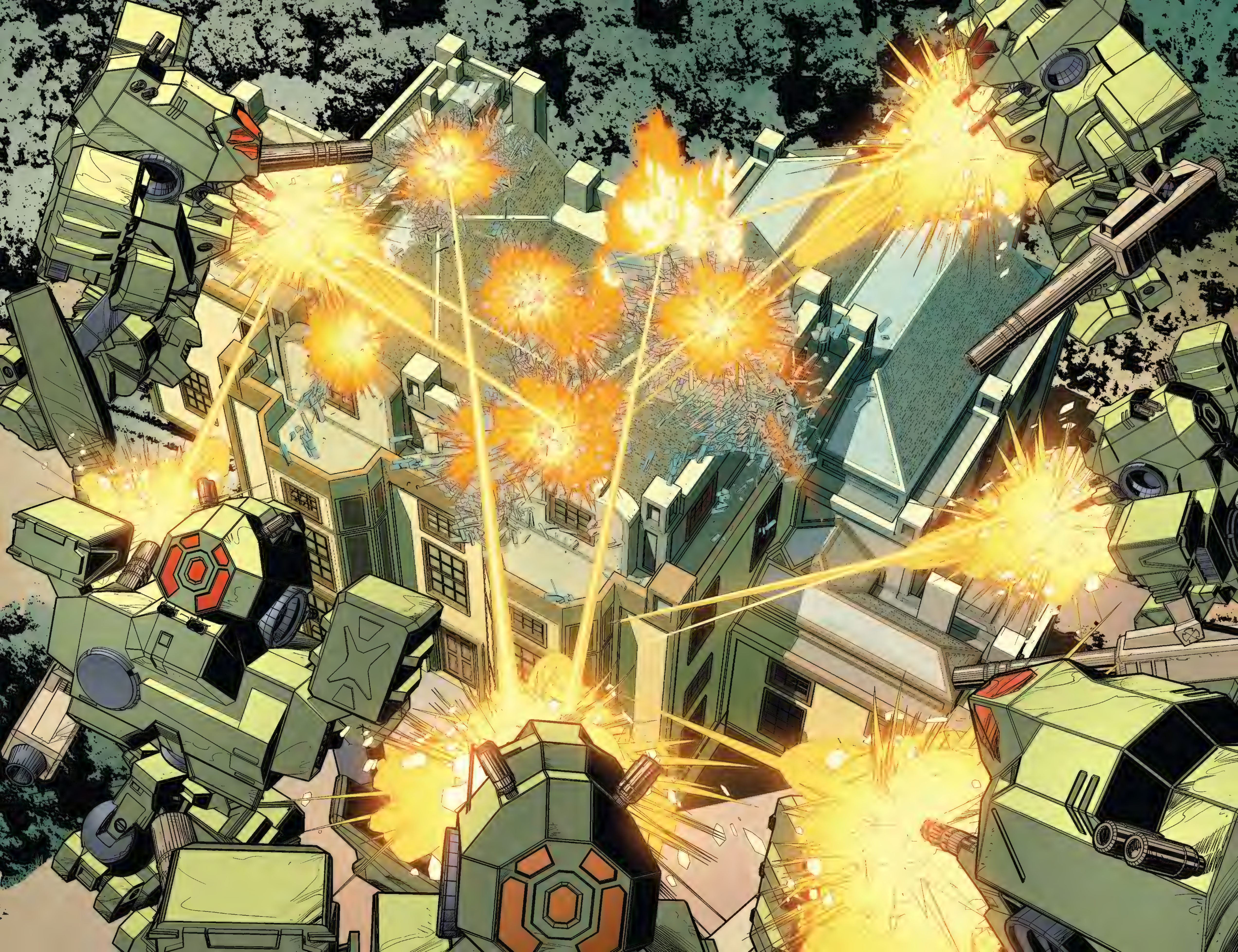

AGH!
AAAHHHH!

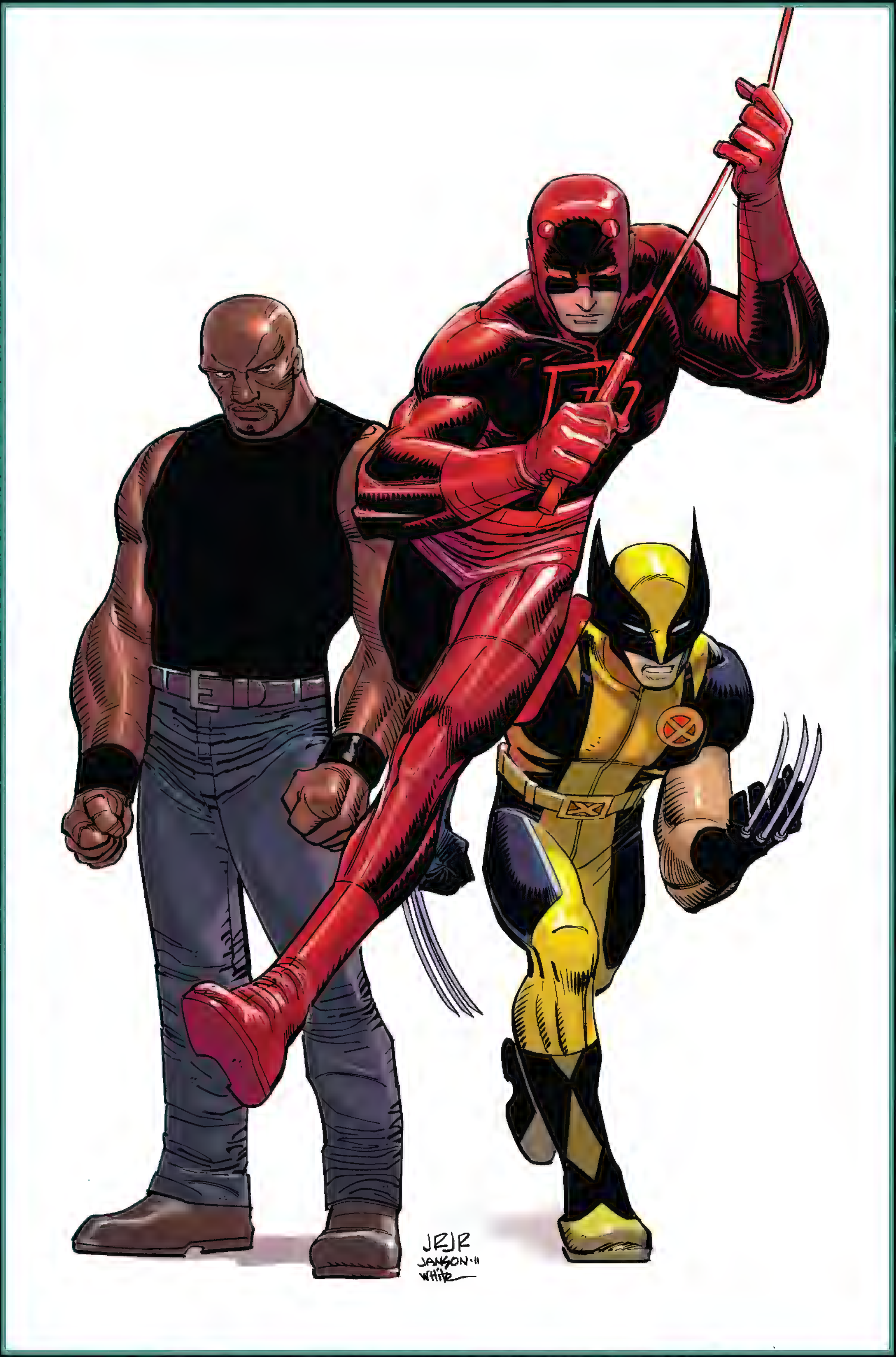

BOOM
DU KLEINES MISTSTÜCK!
NEIN!
NEEEIIINNN!


OH, COME ON...
SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM

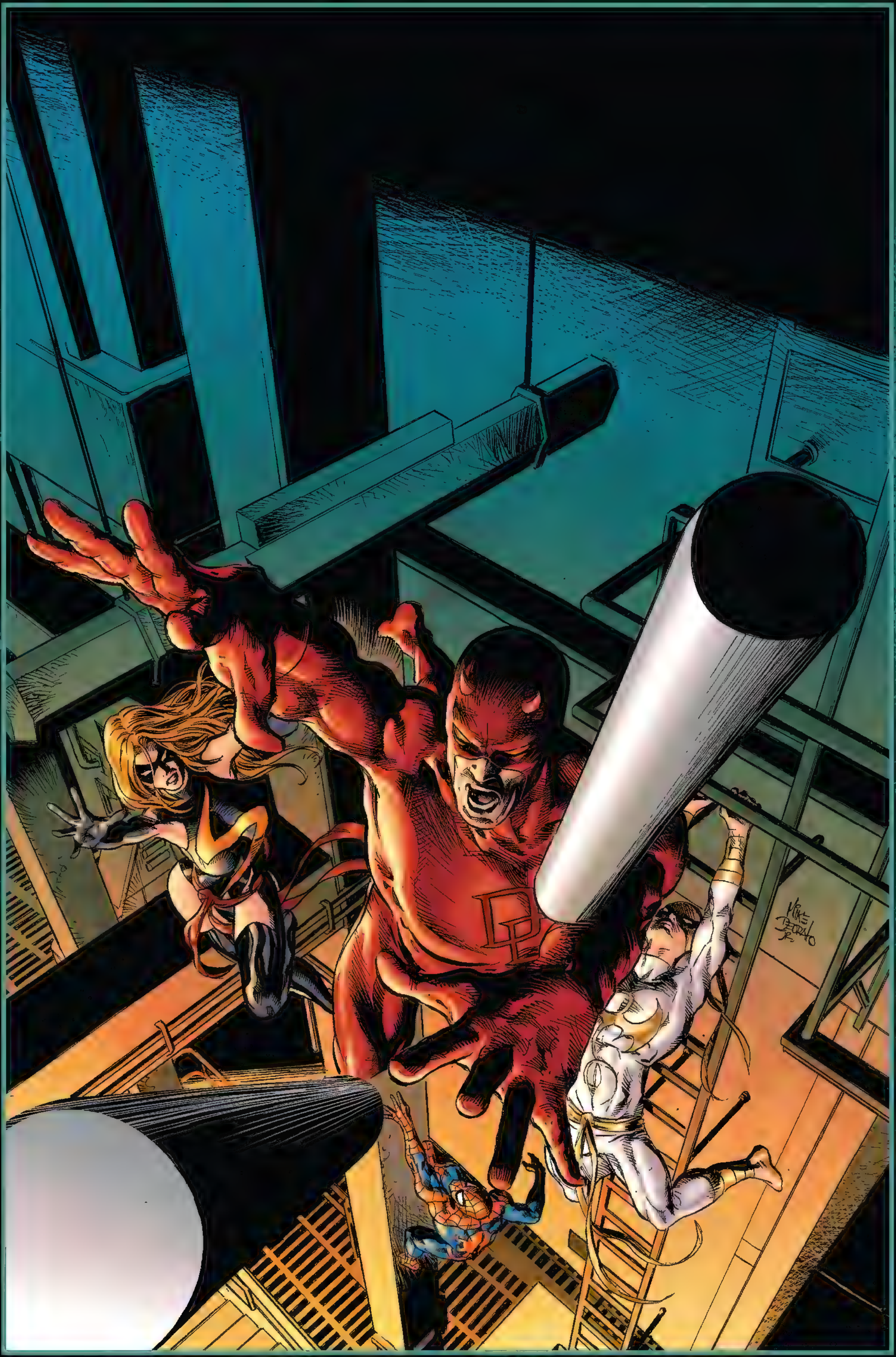

AVENGERS MANSION.
JESSICA, LET'S GO!
WHAT PART OF AVENGERS ASSEMBLE DOES SHE NOT UNDERSTAND?
I KNOW, REALLY.
BABE, I CAN'T GO!
THE CITY'S UNDER ATTACK!
I CAN'T LEAVE THE BABY, LUKE!
WHERE'S THE DAMN NANNY?
THE POINT OF ALL THIS WAS SO YOU COULD BE AN AVENGER.
JUST GO. GO, I GOT IT.
WHAT SHOULD I DO? LEAVE THE KID WITH THE REMOTE AND A BINKY?
GO!
WHAT ABOUT BITCHY WONG?
JEEZ!


I'M SORRY... I GOT HERE...
...AS FAST AS I COULD.
OH MY GOD, DOREEN, ARE YOU OKAY?
I'LL HEAL, MRS. CAGE. GO.
THE CITY IS IN COMPLETE CHAOS.
WE KNOW. WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S OUT THERE?
NOT TO GENERALIZE, BUT... NAZIS.
THE RED SKULL.
ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE OKAY?
THEY NEED YOU, MRS. CAGE.
GO.
THE SECURITY SYSTEM WILL TURN ON WHEN I CLOSE THE DOOR.
GOOD. GO.
YOU REMEMBER THE EMERGENCY SCENARIO?
GO!
NNN.
GEE.
AAH!
THAT FEELS--OW--MUCH WORSE THAN IT LOOKS, BABY.
GLEEK
YEAH, I NEED TO WASH MY HANDS.
AVENGERS MANSION ENTERING LOCKDOWN MODE.
LOCKDOWN MODE?
AVENGERS MANSION UNDER SIEGE.

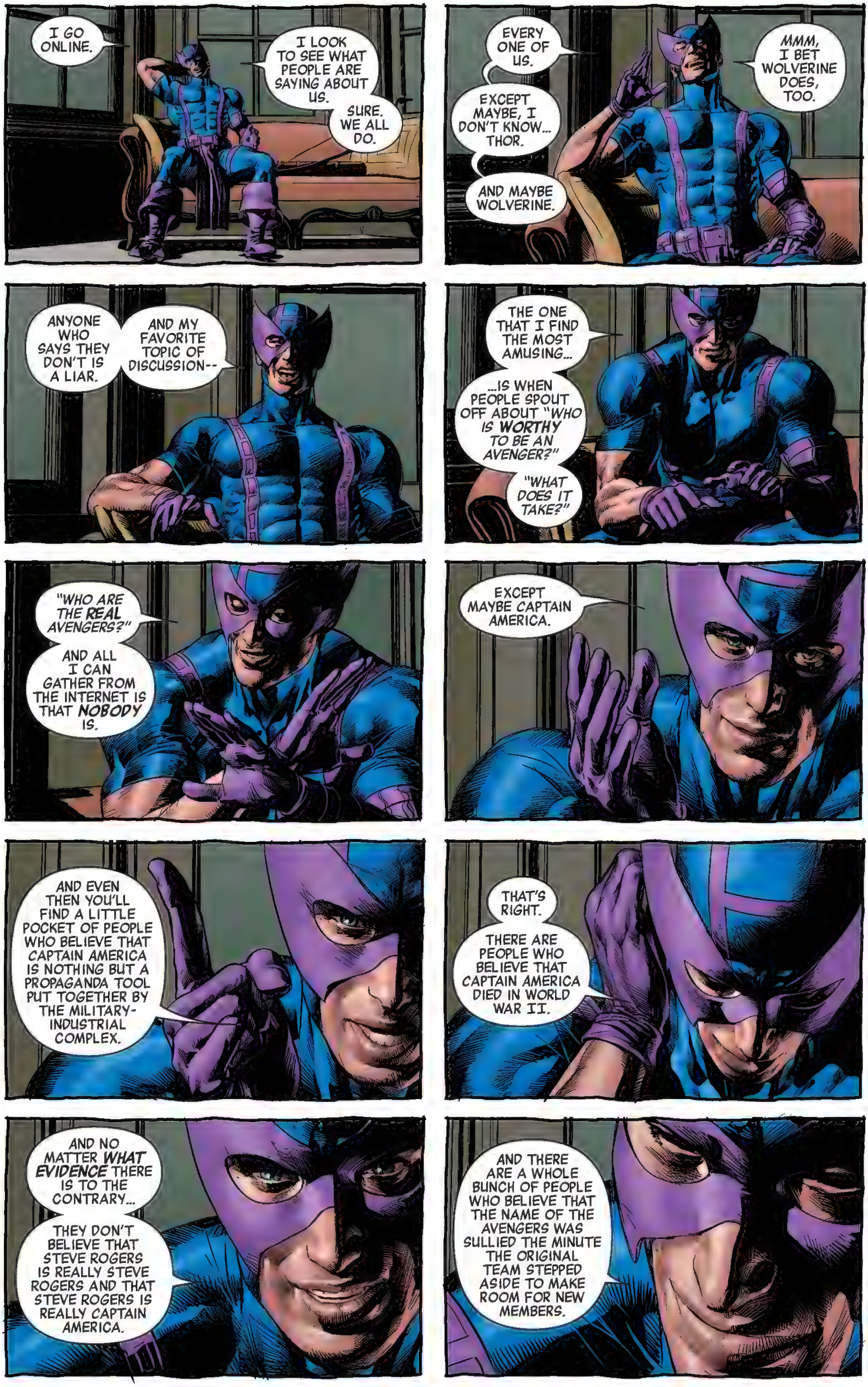


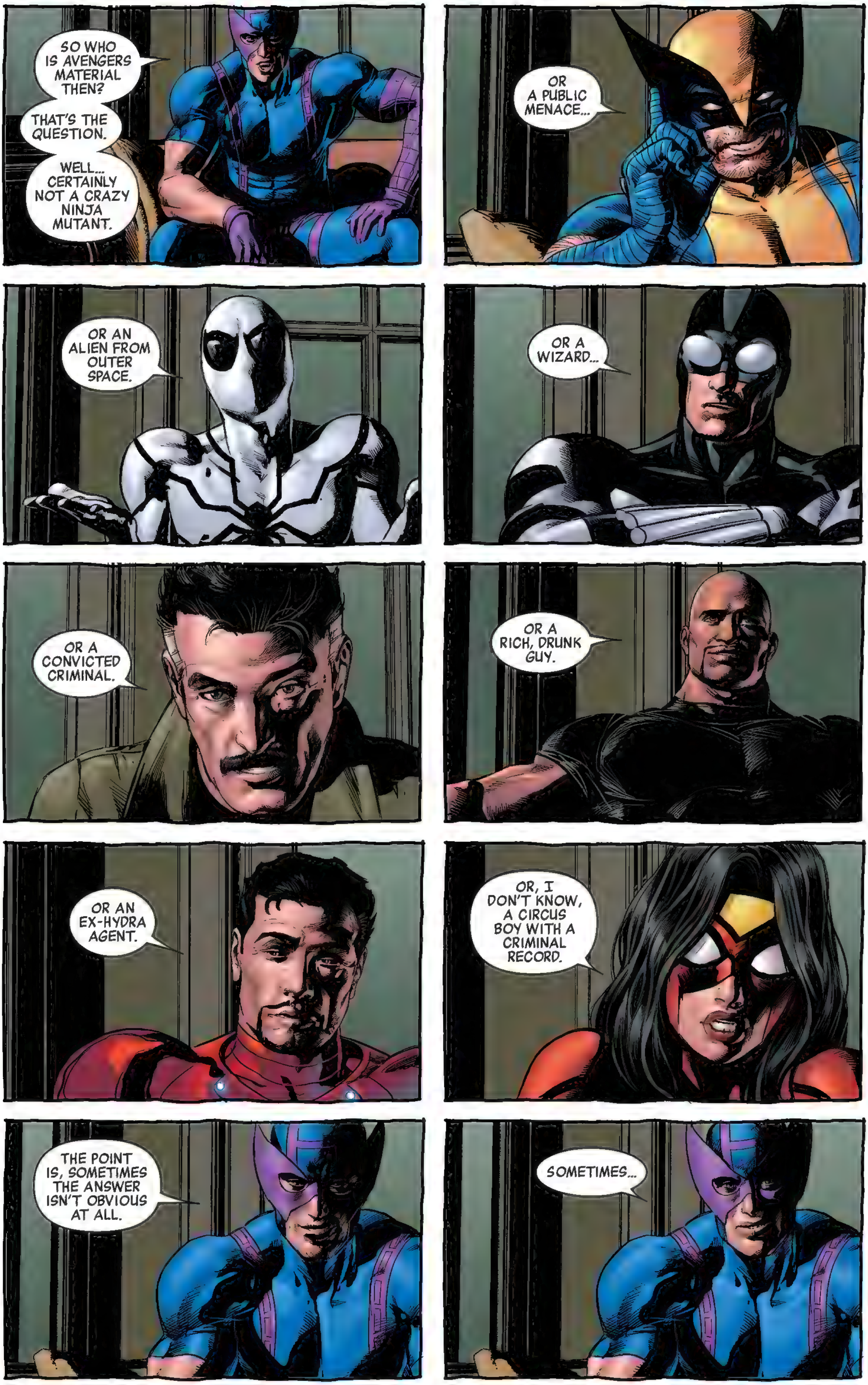

JRJR
JANSON·11
White

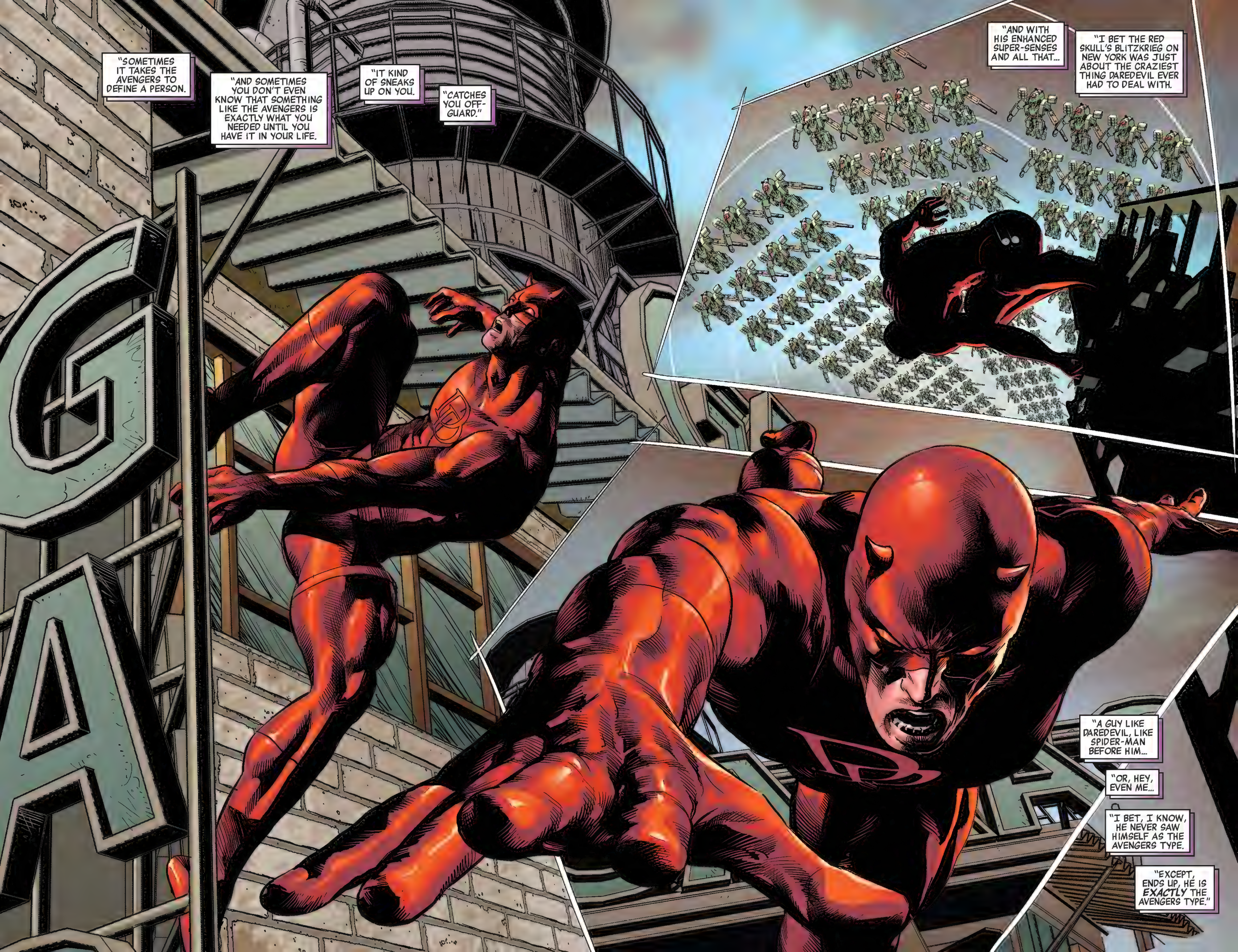
NEW AVENGERS #16 VARIANT BY **JOHN ROMITA JR.,**
KLAUS JANSEN & DEAN WHITE

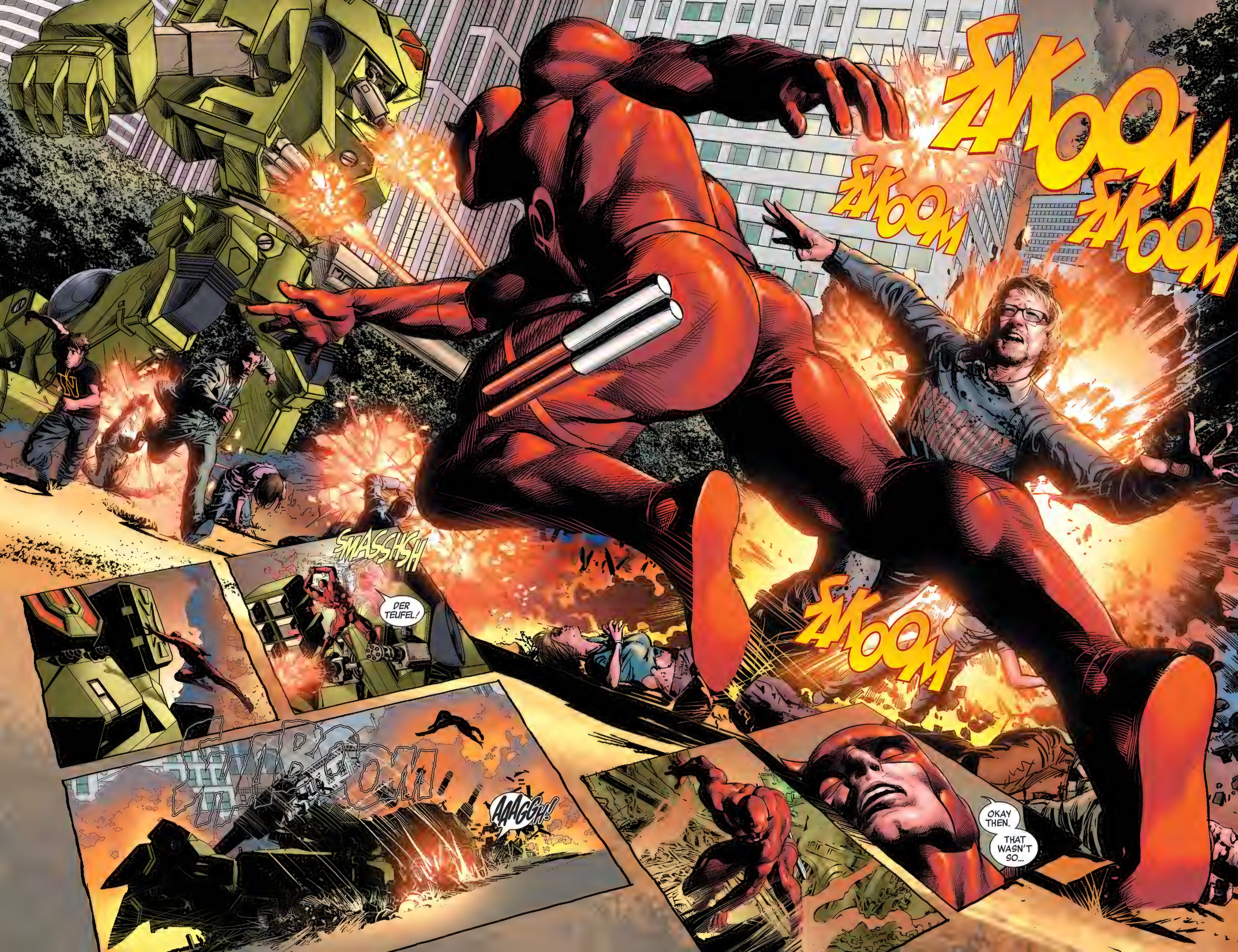

DD
MIKE DEODATO JR.

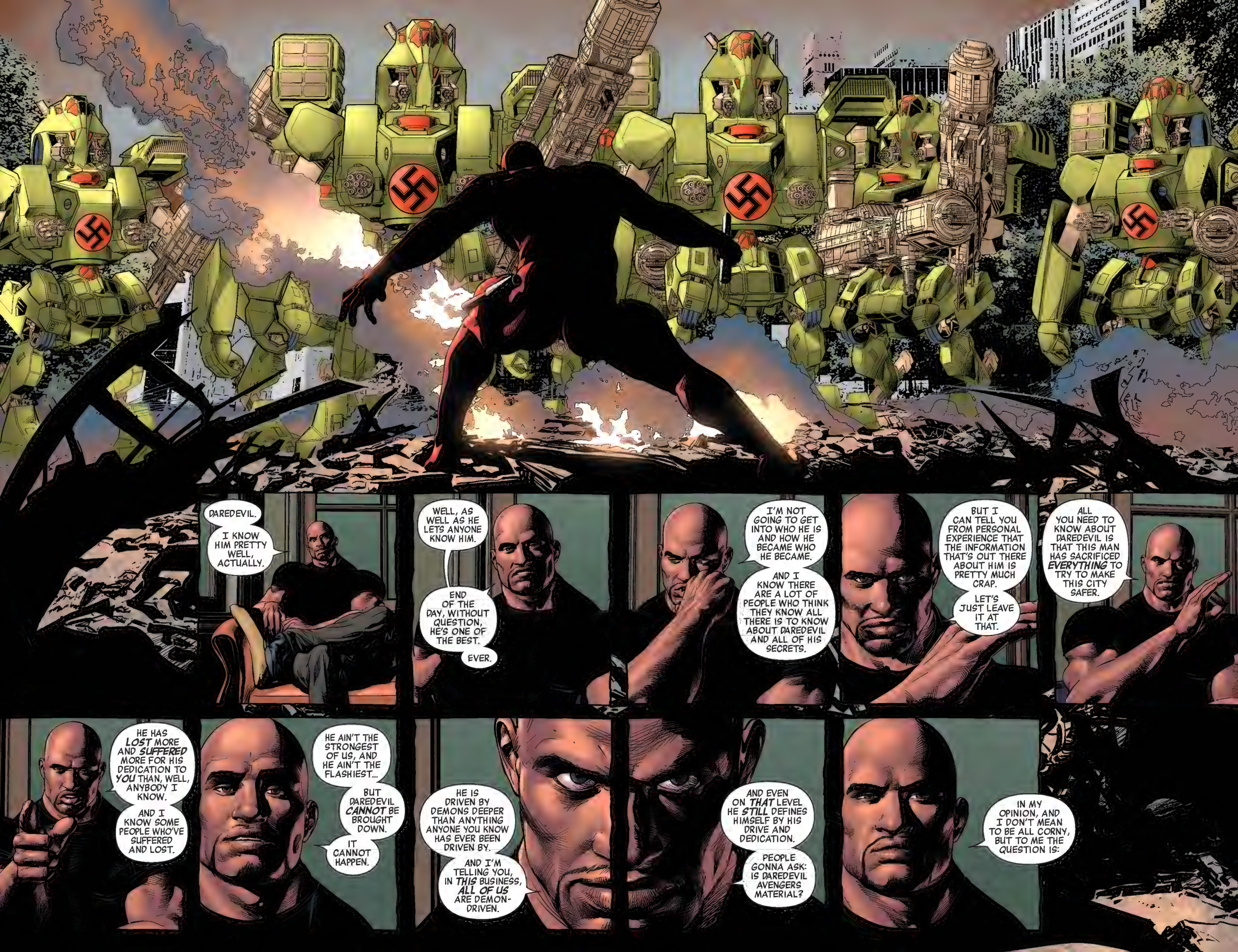
NEW AVENGERS #16

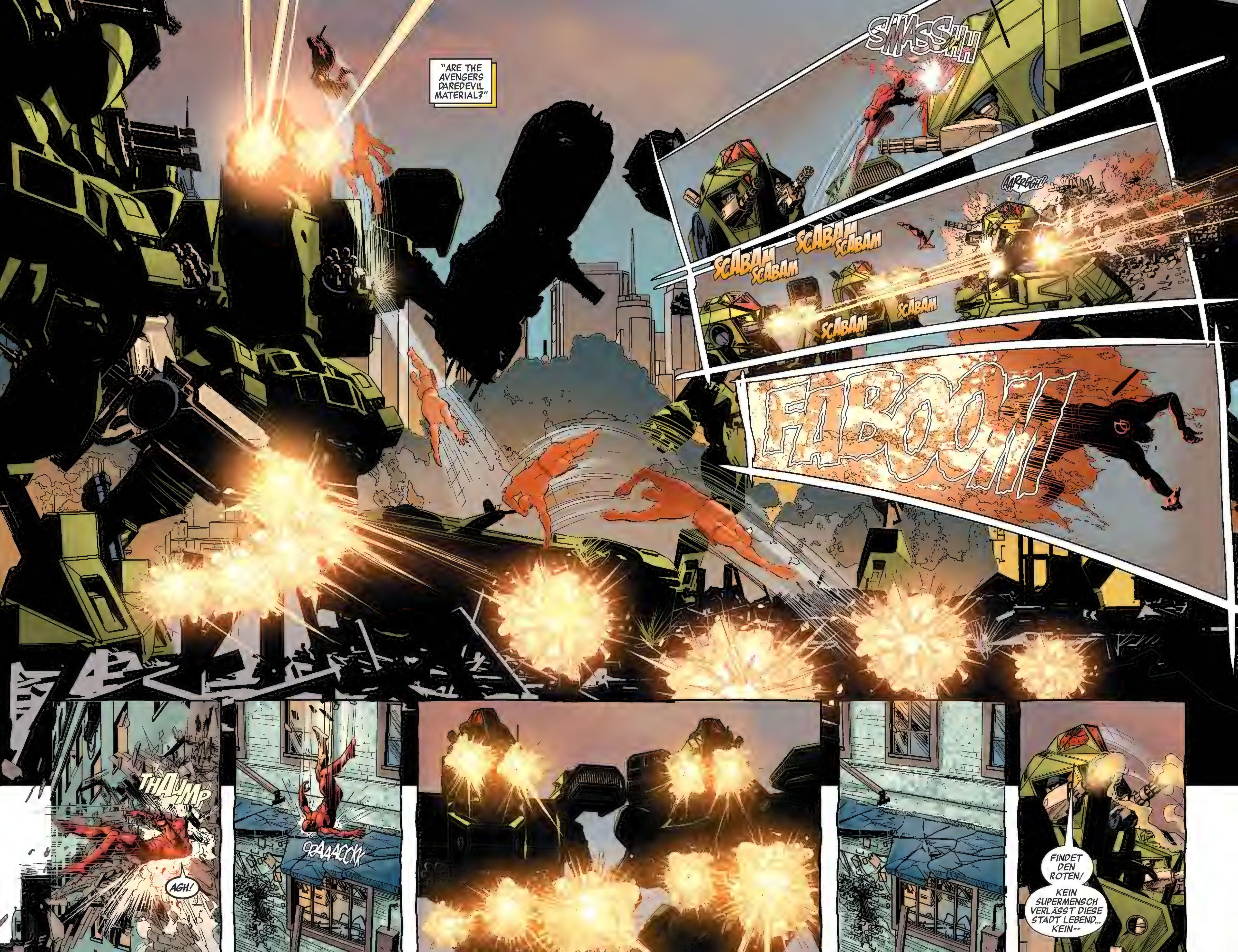

I GO ONLINE.
I LOOK TO SEE WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT US.
SURE. WE ALL DO.
EVERY ONE OF US.
EXCEPT MAYBE, I DON'T KNOW... THOR.
AND MAYBE WOLVERINE.
MMM, I BET WOLVERINE DOES, TOO.
ANYONE WHO SAYS THEY DON'T IS A LIAR.
AND MY FAVORITE TOPIC OF DISCUSSION--
THE ONE THAT I FIND THE MOST AMUSING...
...IS WHEN PEOPLE SPOUT OFF ABOUT *"WHO IS **WORTHY** TO BE AN AVENGER?"*
"WHAT DOES IT TAKE?"
*"WHO ARE THE **REAL** AVENGERS?"*
AND ALL I CAN GATHER FROM THE INTERNET IS THAT ***NOBODY*** IS.
EXCEPT MAYBE CAPTAIN AMERICA.
AND EVEN THEN YOU'LL FIND A LITTLE POCKET OF PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE THAT CAPTAIN AMERICA IS NOTHING BUT A PROPAGANDA TOOL PUT TOGETHER BY THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX.
THAT'S RIGHT.
THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE THAT CAPTAIN AMERICA DIED IN WORLD WAR II.
AND NO MATTER ***WHAT EVIDENCE*** THERE IS TO THE CONTRARY...
THEY DON'T BELIEVE THAT STEVE ROGERS IS REALLY STEVE ROGERS AND THAT STEVE ROGERS IS REALLY CAPTAIN AMERICA.
AND THERE ARE A WHOLE BUNCH OF PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE THAT THE NAME OF THE AVENGERS WAS SULLIED THE MINUTE THE ORIGINAL TEAM STEPPED ASIDE TO MAKE ROOM FOR NEW MEMBERS.

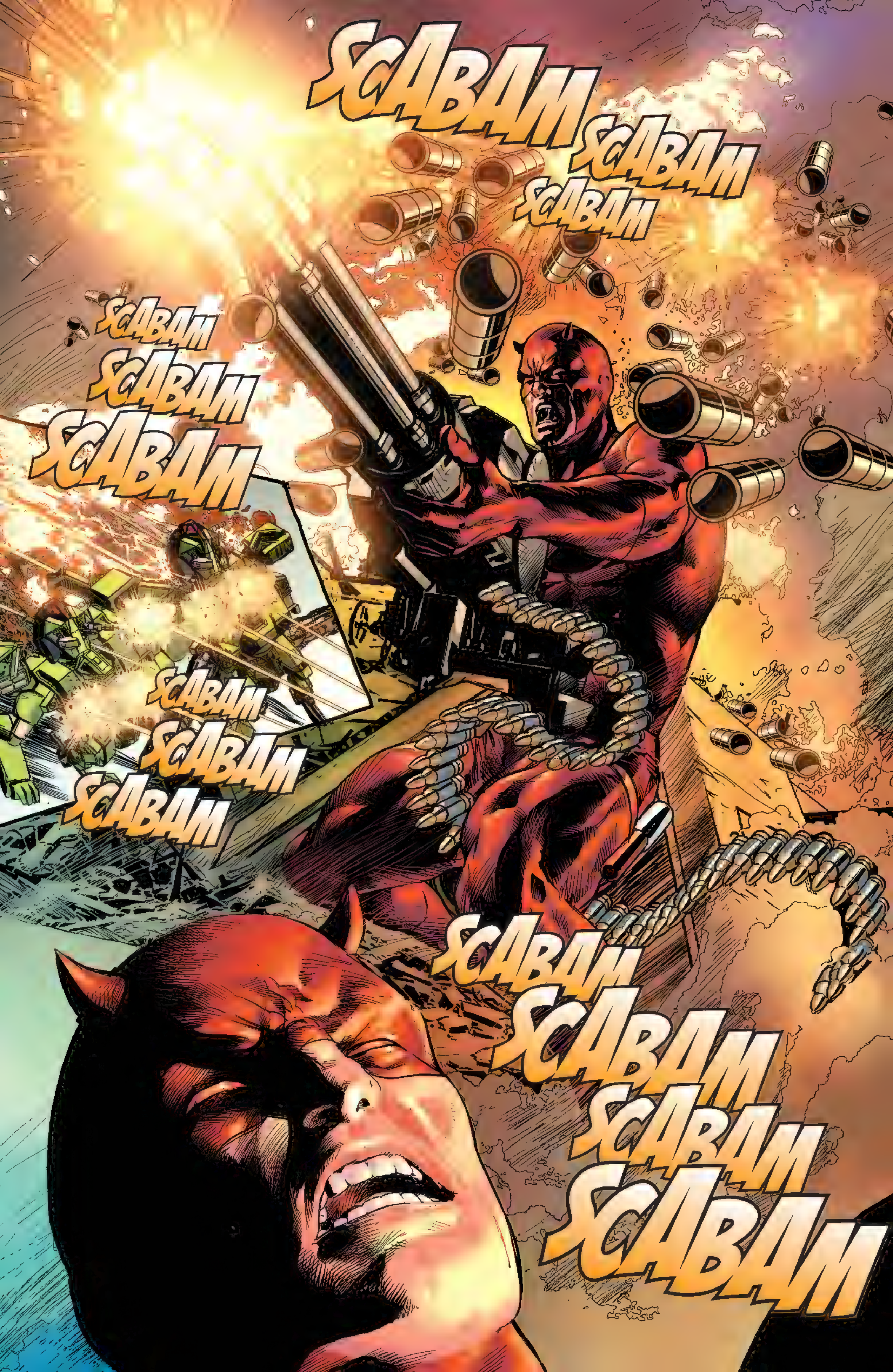

SO WHO IS AVENGERS MATERIAL THEN?
THAT'S THE QUESTION.
WELL... CERTAINLY NOT A CRAZY NINJA MUTANT.
OR A PUBLIC MENACE...
OR AN ALIEN FROM OUTER SPACE.
OR A WIZARD...
OR A CONVICTED CRIMINAL.
OR A RICH, DRUNK GUY.
OR AN EX-HYDRA AGENT.
OR, I DON'T KNOW, A CIRCUS BOY WITH A CRIMINAL RECORD.
THE POINT IS, SOMETIMES THE ANSWER ISN'T OBVIOUS AT ALL.
SOMETIMES...

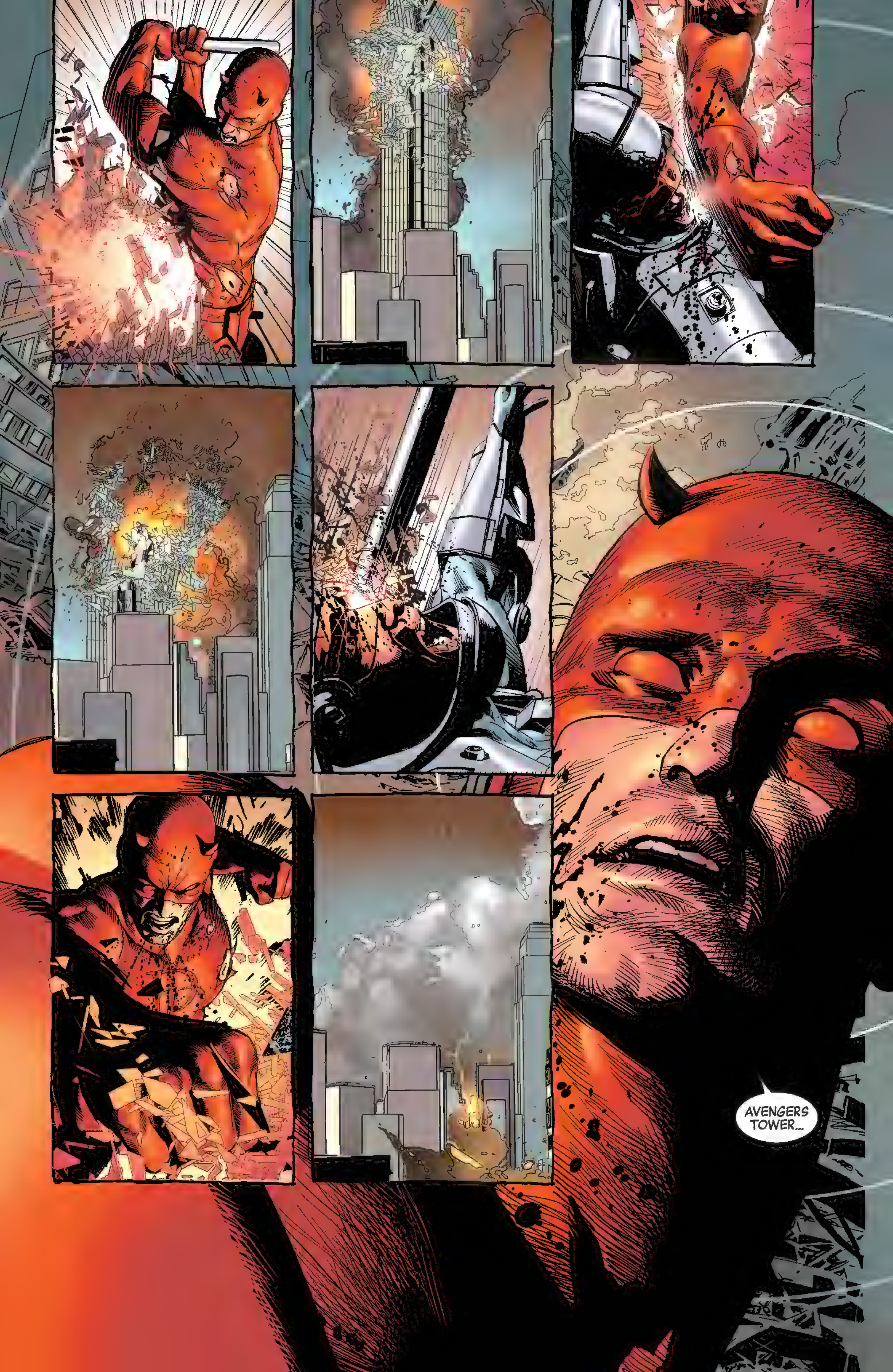

"SOMETIMES IT TAKES THE AVENGERS TO DEFINE A PERSON.
"AND SOMETIMES YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW THAT SOMETHING LIKE THE AVENGERS IS EXACTLY WHAT YOU NEEDED UNTIL YOU HAVE IT IN YOUR LIFE.
"IT KIND OF SNEAKS UP ON YOU.
"CATCHES YOU OFF-GUARD."
"AND WITH HIS ENHANCED SUPER-SENSES AND ALL THAT...
"I BET THE RED SKULL'S BLITZKRIEG ON NEW YORK WAS JUST ABOUT THE CRAZIEST THING DAREDEVIL EVER HAD TO DEAL WITH.
"A GUY LIKE DAREDEVIL, LIKE SPIDER-MAN BEFORE HIM...
"OR, HEY, EVEN ME...
"I BET, I KNOW, HE NEVER SAW HIMSELF AS THE AVENGERS TYPE.
"EXCEPT, ENDS UP, HE IS *EXACTLY* THE AVENGERS TYPE."

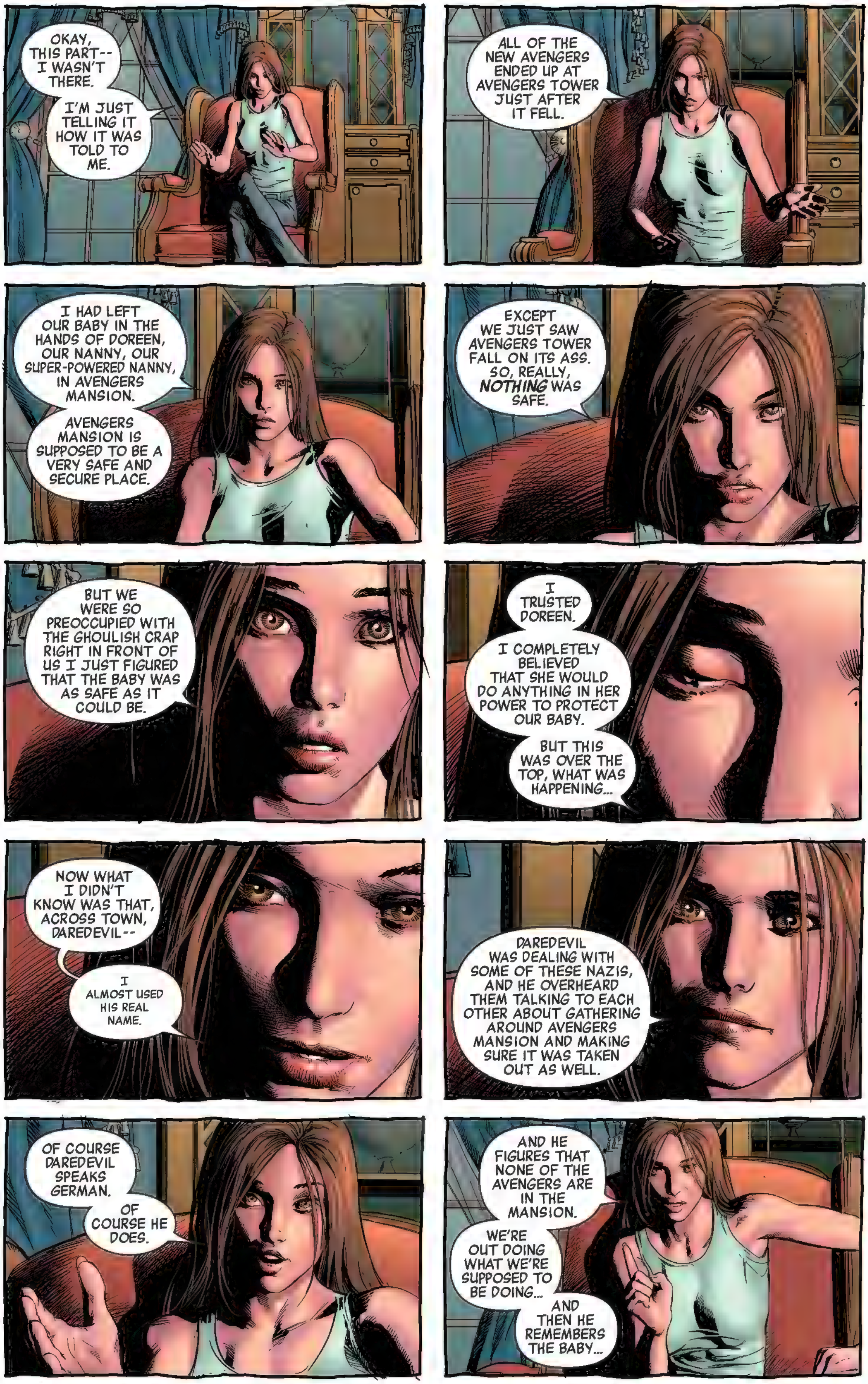

SKOOM
SKOOM
SKOOM
SKOOM
SMASSHSH
DER TEUFEL!
THROOM
AAAGGH!
OKAY THEN.
THAT WASN'T SO...

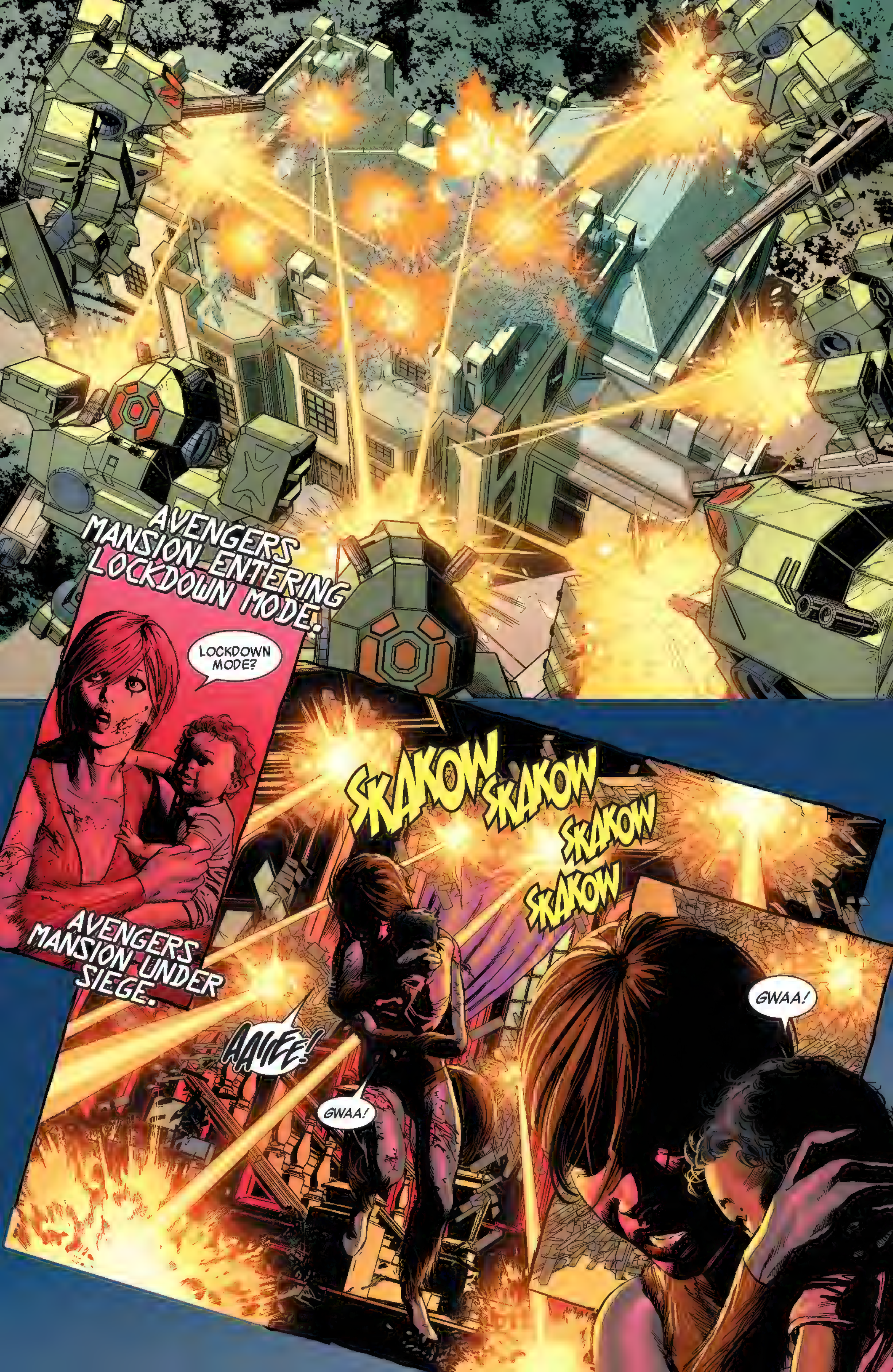

DAREDEVIL.
I KNOW HIM PRETTY WELL, ACTUALLY.
WELL, AS WELL AS HE LETS ANYONE KNOW HIM.
END OF THE DAY, WITHOUT QUESTION, HE'S ONE OF THE BEST.
EVER.
I'M NOT GOING TO GET INTO WHO HE IS AND HOW HE BECAME WHO HE BECAME.
AND I KNOW THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO THINK THEY KNOW ALL THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT DAREDEVIL AND ALL OF HIS SECRETS.
BUT I CAN TELL YOU FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE THAT THE INFORMATION THAT'S OUT THERE ABOUT HIM IS PRETTY MUCH CRAP.
LET'S JUST LEAVE IT AT THAT.
ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DAREDEVIL IS THAT THIS MAN HAS SACRIFICED ***EVERYTHING*** TO TRY TO MAKE THIS CITY SAFER.
HE HAS ***LOST*** MORE AND ***SUFFERED*** MORE FOR HIS DEDICATION TO ***YOU*** THAN, WELL, ANYBODY I KNOW.
AND I KNOW SOME PEOPLE WHO'VE SUFFERED AND LOST.
HE AIN'T THE STRONGEST OF US, AND HE AIN'T THE FLASHIEST...
BUT DAREDEVIL ***CANNOT*** BE BROUGHT DOWN.
IT CANNOT HAPPEN.
HE IS DRIVEN BY DEMONS DEEPER THAN ANYTHING ANYONE YOU KNOW HAS EVER BEEN DRIVEN BY.
AND I'M TELLING YOU, IN ***THIS*** BUSINESS, ***ALL OF US*** ARE DEMON-DRIVEN.
AND EVEN ON ***THAT*** LEVEL HE ***STILL*** DEFINES HIMSELF BY HIS DRIVE AND DEDICATION.
PEOPLE GONNA ASK: IS DAREDEVIL AVENGERS MATERIAL?
IN MY OPINION, AND I DON'T MEAN TO BE ALL CORNY, BUT TO ME THE QUESTION IS:

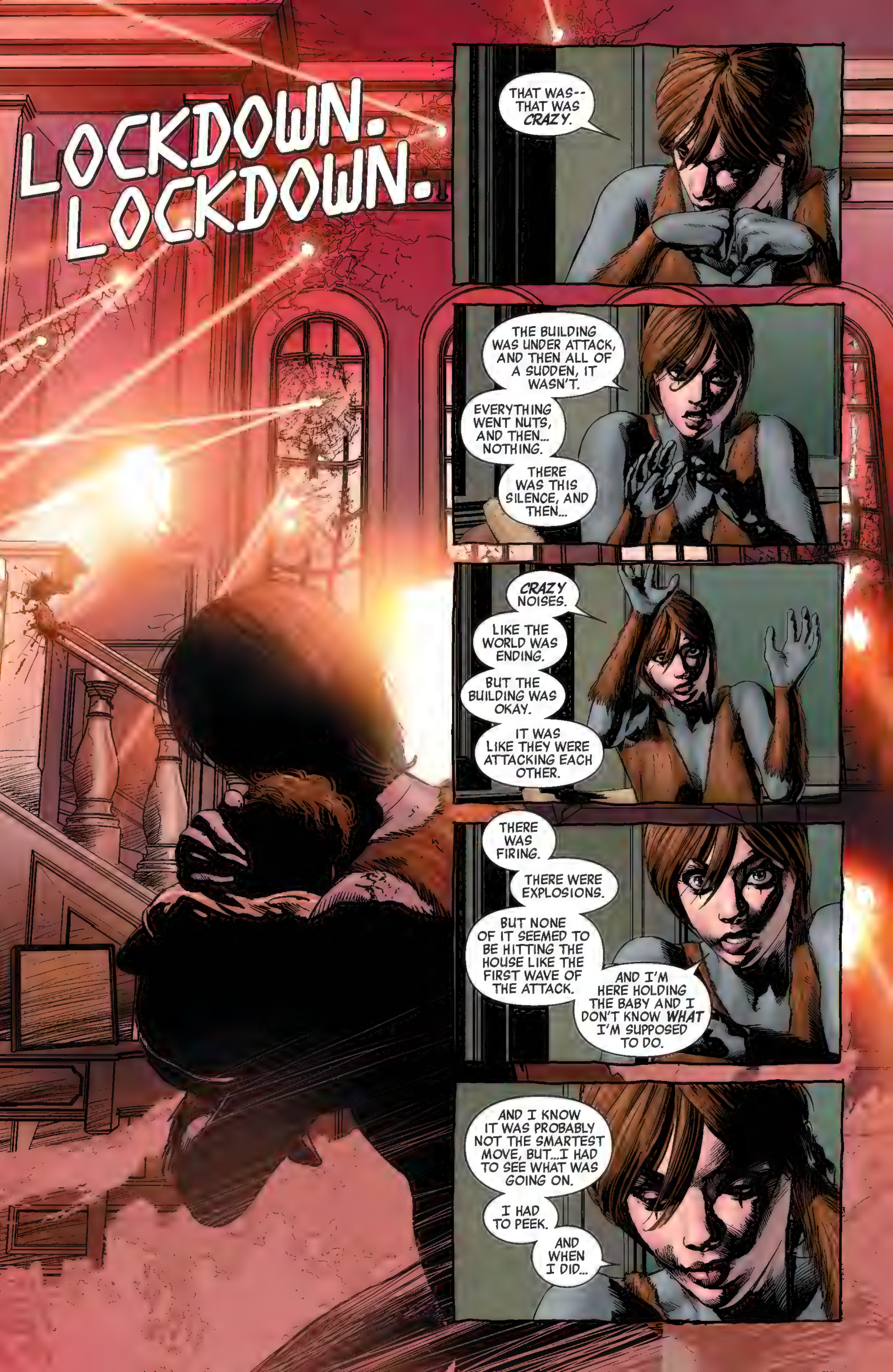

"ARE THE AVENGERS DAREDEVIL MATERIAL?"
SMASSHH
AARRGGH!
SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM
FABOOM
THAUMP
AGH!
CRAAACKK
FINDET DEN ROTEN!
KEIN SUPERMENSCH VERLÄSST DIESE STADT LEBEND... KEIN--

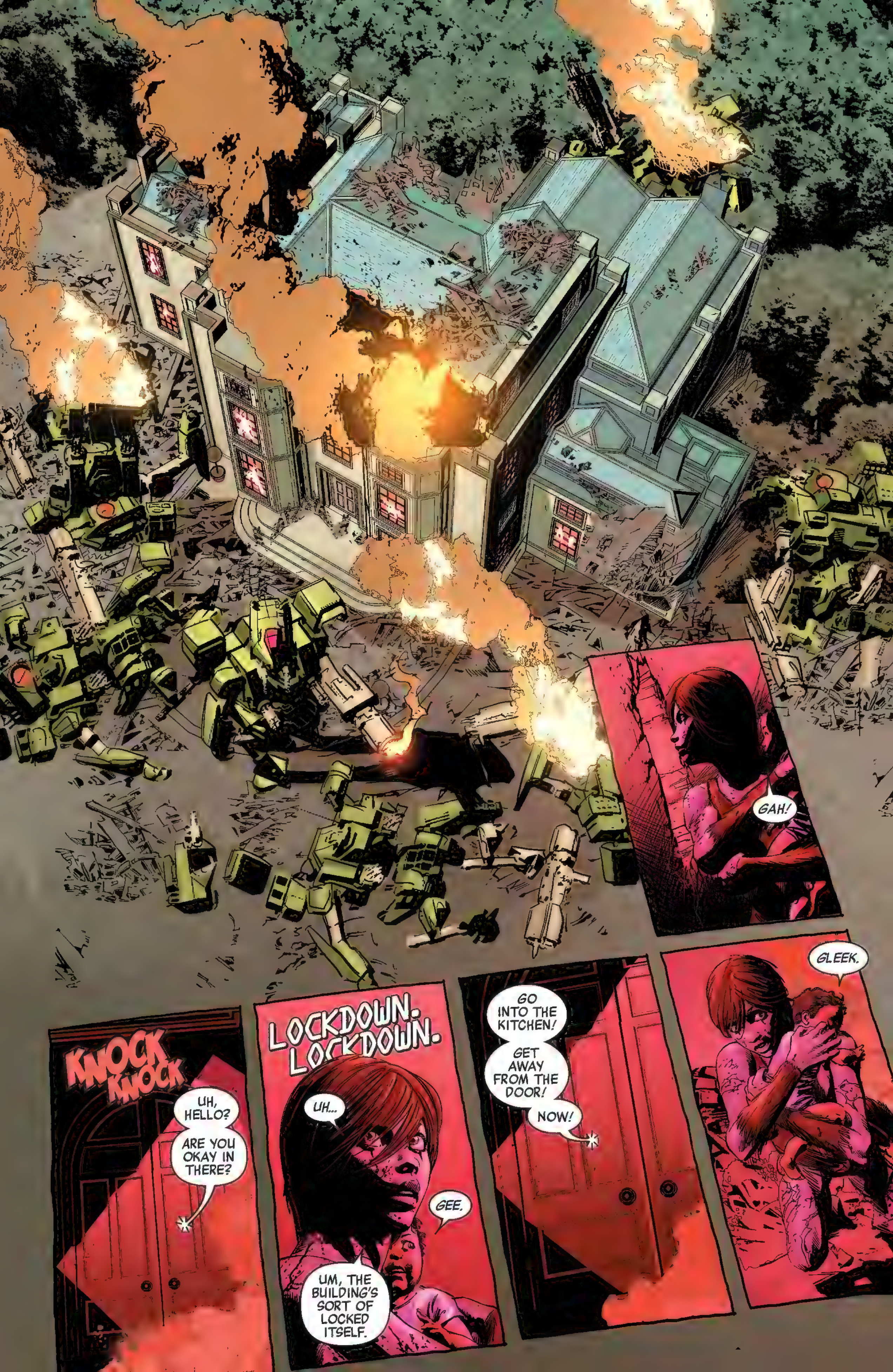

SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM
SCABAM

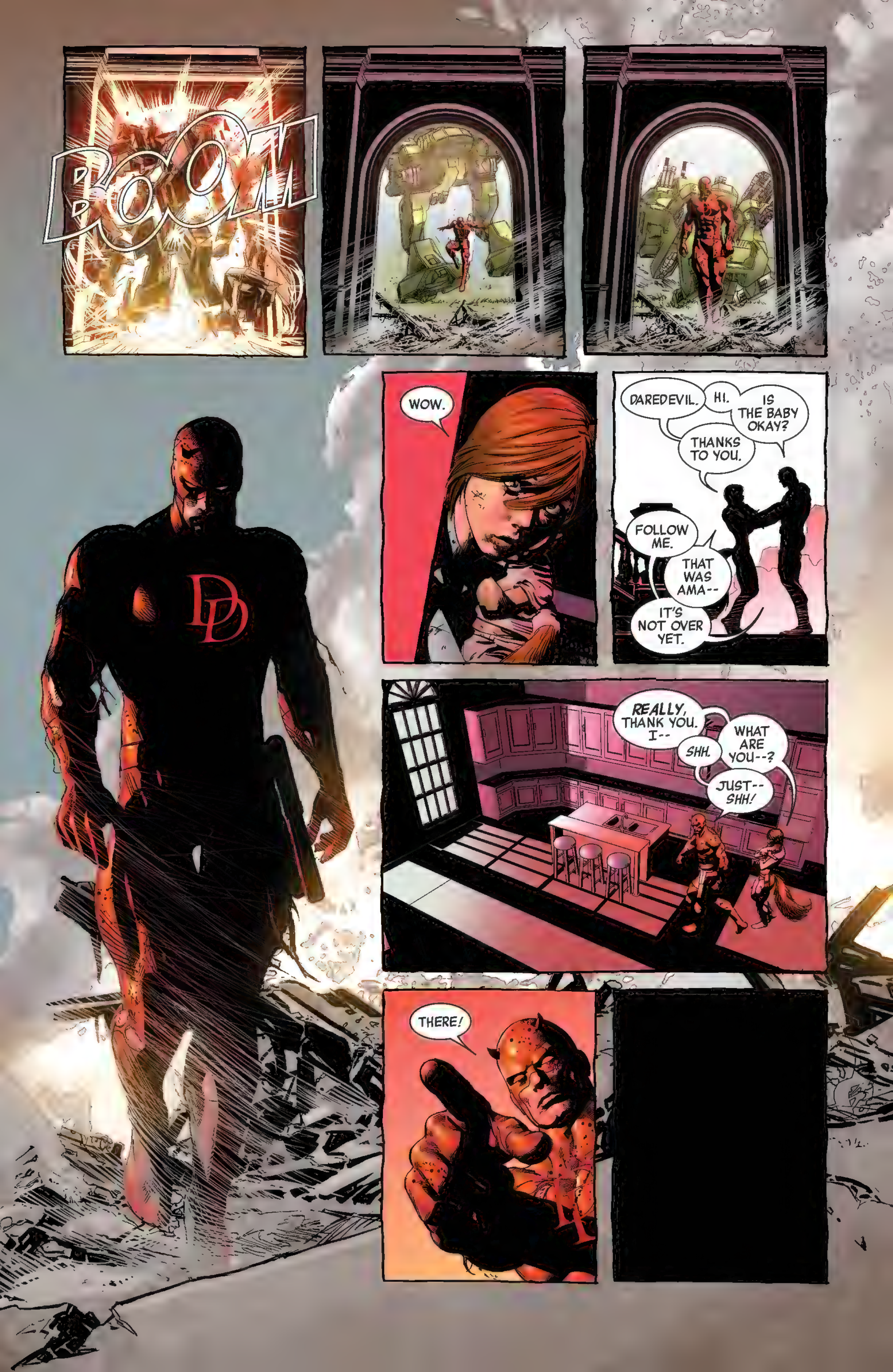

AVENGERS TOWER...

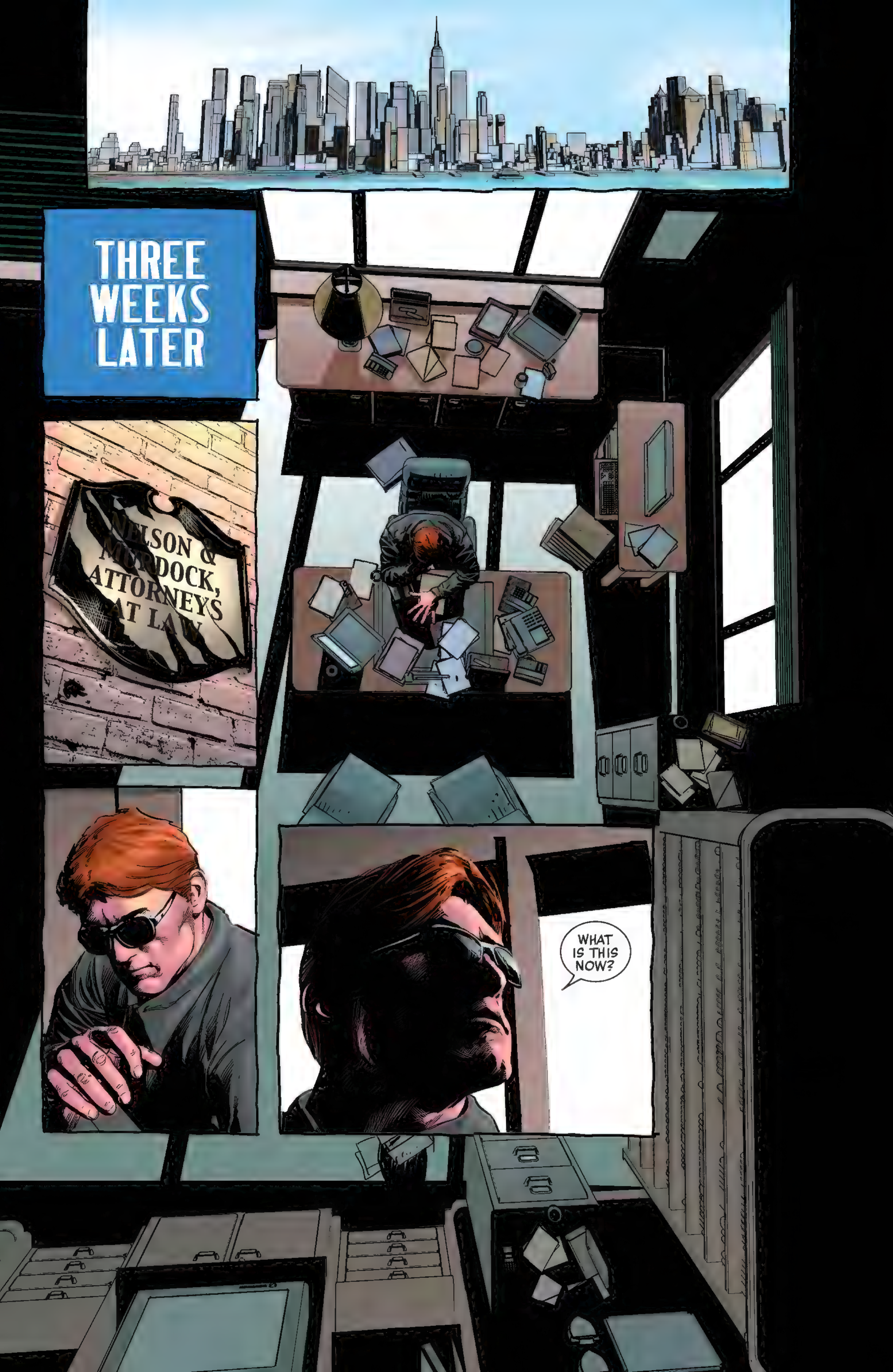

OKAY, THIS PART-- I WASN'T THERE.
I'M JUST TELLING IT HOW IT WAS TOLD TO ME.
ALL OF THE NEW AVENGERS ENDED UP AT AVENGERS TOWER JUST AFTER IT FELL.
I HAD LEFT OUR BABY IN THE HANDS OF DOREEN, OUR NANNY, OUR SUPER-POWERED NANNY, IN AVENGERS MANSION.
AVENGERS MANSION IS SUPPOSED TO BE A VERY SAFE AND SECURE PLACE.
EXCEPT WE JUST SAW AVENGERS TOWER FALL ON ITS ASS. SO, REALLY, *NOTHING* WAS SAFE.
BUT WE WERE SO PREOCCUPIED WITH THE GHOULISH CRAP RIGHT IN FRONT OF US I JUST FIGURED THAT THE BABY WAS AS SAFE AS IT COULD BE.
I TRUSTED DOREEN.
I COMPLETELY BELIEVED THAT SHE WOULD DO ANYTHING IN HER POWER TO PROTECT OUR BABY.
BUT THIS WAS OVER THE TOP, WHAT WAS HAPPENING...
NOW WHAT I DIDN'T KNOW WAS THAT, ACROSS TOWN, DAREDEVIL--
I ALMOST USED HIS REAL NAME.
DAREDEVIL WAS DEALING WITH SOME OF THESE NAZIS, AND HE OVERHEARD THEM TALKING TO EACH OTHER ABOUT GATHERING AROUND AVENGERS MANSION AND MAKING SURE IT WAS TAKEN OUT AS WELL.
OF COURSE DAREDEVIL SPEAKS GERMAN.
OF COURSE HE DOES.
AND HE FIGURES THAT NONE OF THE AVENGERS ARE IN THE MANSION.
WE'RE OUT DOING WHAT WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE DOING...
AND THEN HE REMEMBERS THE BABY...

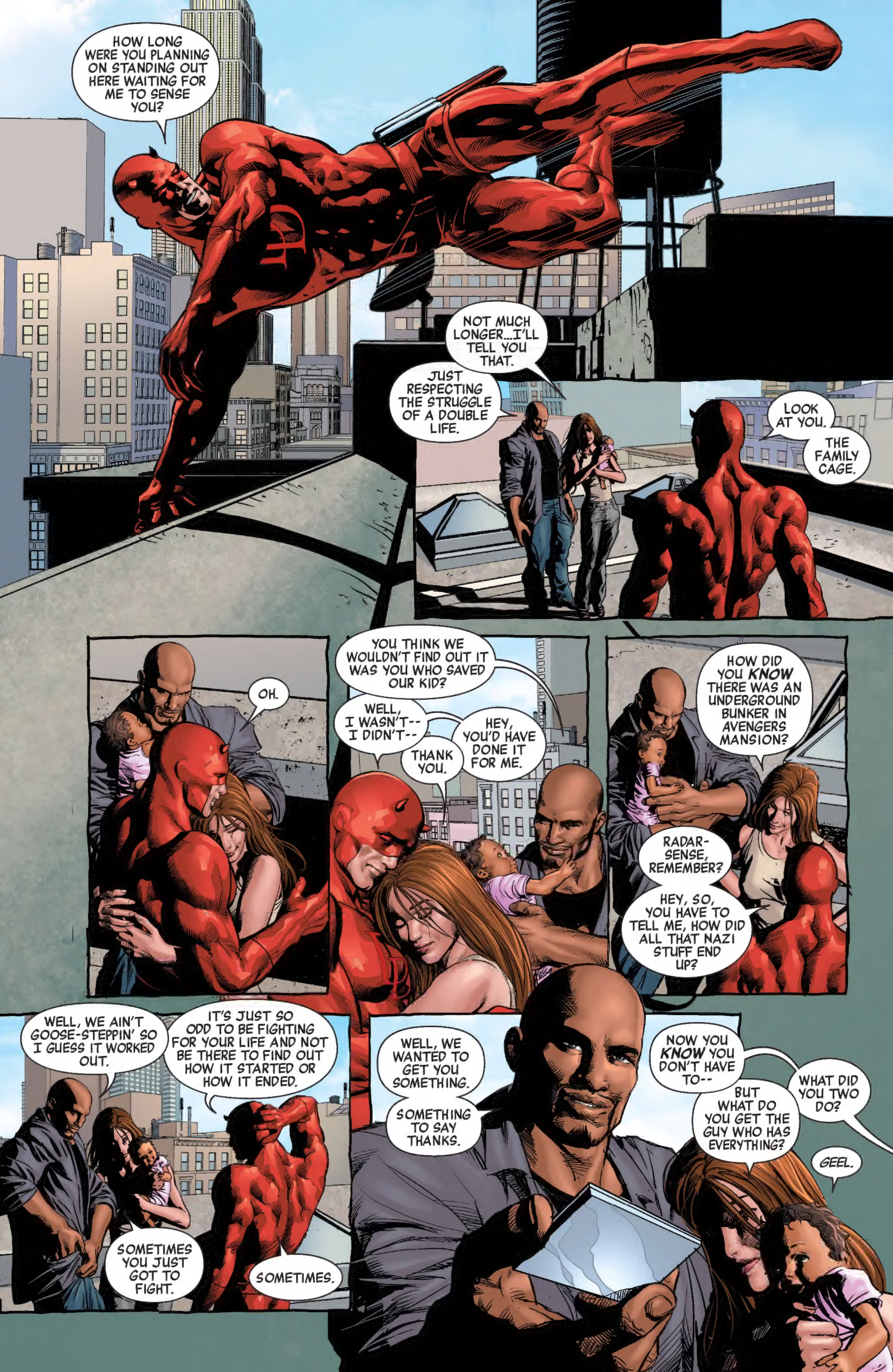

AVENGERS MANSION ENTERING LOCKDOWN MODE.
LOCKDOWN MODE?
AVENGERS MANSION UNDER SIEGE.
SKAKOW
SKAKOW
SKAKOW
SKAKOW
AAIEE!
GWAA!
GWAA!

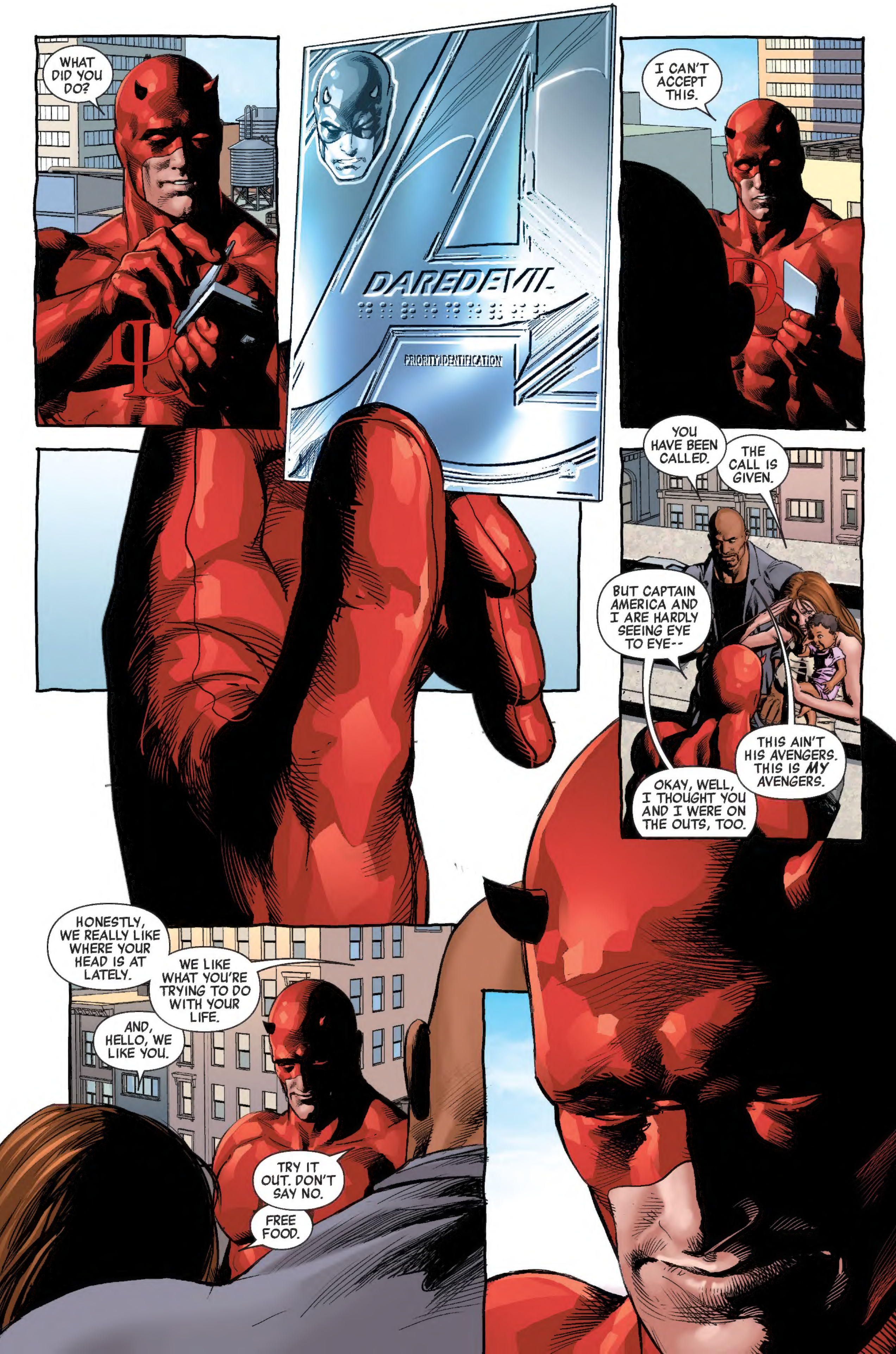

LOCKDOWN. LOCKDOWN.
THAT WAS-- THAT WAS *CRAZY*.
THE BUILDING WAS UNDER ATTACK, AND THEN ALL OF A SUDDEN, IT WASN'T.
EVERYTHING WENT NUTS, AND THEN... NOTHING.
THERE WAS THIS SILENCE, AND THEN...
CRAZY NOISES.
LIKE THE WORLD WAS ENDING.
BUT THE BUILDING WAS OKAY.
IT WAS LIKE THEY WERE ATTACKING EACH OTHER.
THERE WAS FIRING.
THERE WERE EXPLOSIONS.
BUT NONE OF IT SEEMED TO BE HITTING THE HOUSE LIKE THE FIRST WAVE OF THE ATTACK.
AND I'M HERE HOLDING THE BABY AND I DON'T KNOW *WHAT* I'M SUPPOSED TO DO.
AND I KNOW IT WAS PROBABLY NOT THE SMARTEST MOVE, BUT...I HAD TO SEE WHAT WAS GOING ON.
I HAD TO PEEK.
AND WHEN I DID...

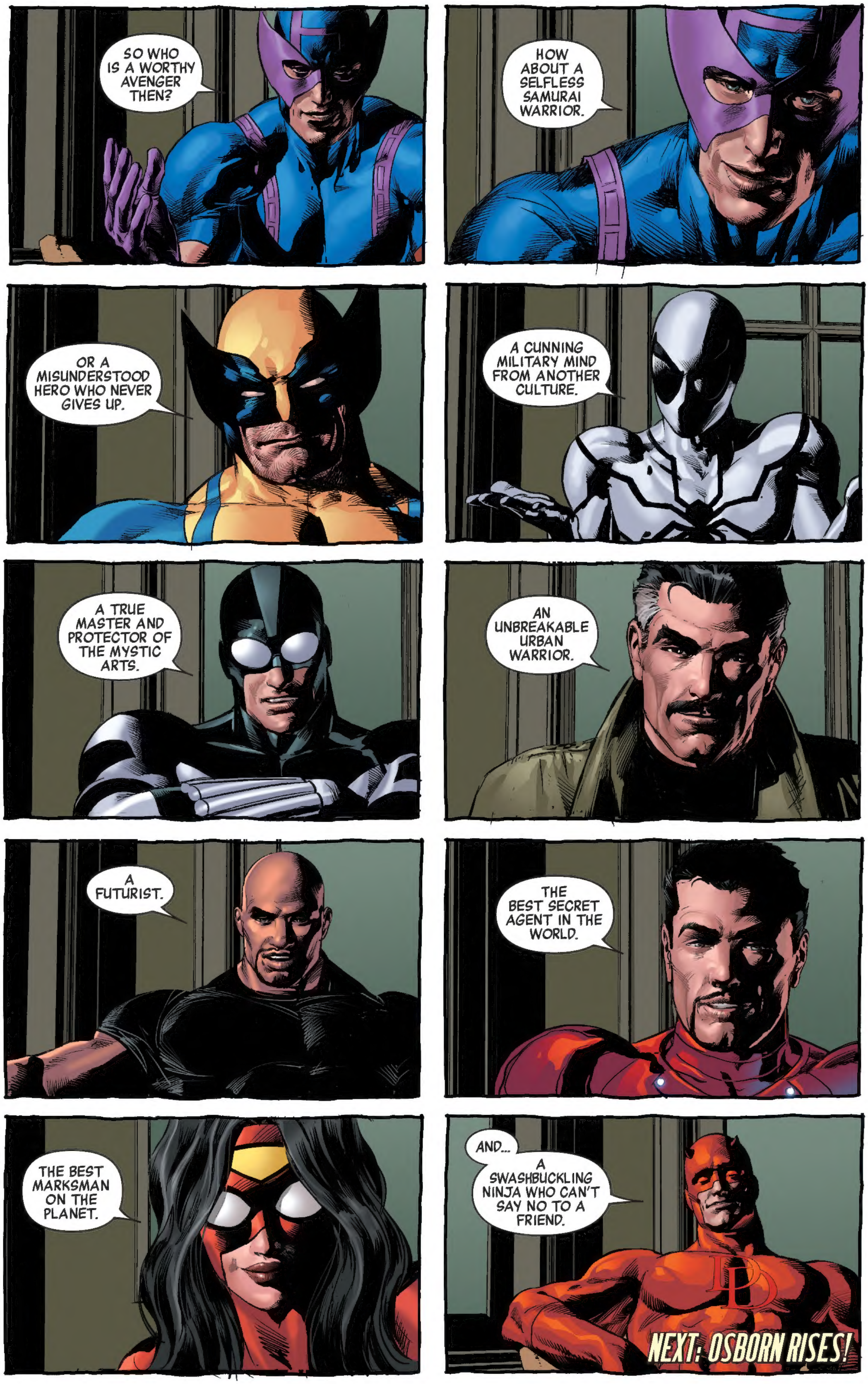

GAH!
KNOCK KNOCK
UH, HELLO?
ARE YOU OKAY IN THERE?
LOCKDOWN. LOCKDOWN.
UH...
GEE.
UM, THE BUILDING'S SORT OF LOCKED ITSELF.
GO INTO THE KITCHEN!
GET AWAY FROM THE DOOR!
NOW!
GLEEK.


BOOM
WOW.
DAREDEVIL.
HI.
IS THE BABY OKAY?
THANKS TO YOU.
FOLLOW ME.
THAT WAS AMA--
IT'S NOT OVER YET.
REALLY, THANK YOU. I--
SHH.
WHAT ARE YOU--?
JUST-- SHH!
THERE!


THREE WEEKS LATER
NELSON & MURDOCK, ATTORNEYS AT LAW
WHAT IS THIS NOW?


HOW LONG WERE YOU PLANNING ON STANDING OUT HERE WAITING FOR ME TO SENSE YOU?
NOT MUCH LONGER...I'LL TELL YOU THAT.
JUST RESPECTING THE STRUGGLE OF A DOUBLE LIFE.
LOOK AT YOU.
THE FAMILY CAGE.
OH.
YOU THINK WE WOULDN'T FIND OUT IT WAS YOU WHO SAVED OUR KID?
WELL, I WASN'T-- I DIDN'T--
HEY, YOU'D HAVE DONE IT FOR ME.
THANK YOU.
HOW DID YOU *KNOW* THERE WAS AN UNDERGROUND BUNKER IN AVENGERS MANSION?
RADAR-SENSE, REMEMBER?
HEY, SO, YOU HAVE TO TELL ME, HOW DID ALL THAT NAZI STUFF END UP?
WELL, WE AIN'T GOOSE-STEPPIN' SO I GUESS IT WORKED OUT.
IT'S JUST SO ODD TO BE FIGHTING FOR YOUR LIFE AND NOT BE THERE TO FIND OUT HOW IT STARTED OR HOW IT ENDED.
SOMETIMES YOU JUST GOT TO FIGHT.
SOMETIMES.
WELL, WE WANTED TO GET YOU SOMETHING.
SOMETHING TO SAY THANKS.
NOW YOU *KNOW* YOU DON'T HAVE TO--
BUT WHAT DO YOU GET THE GUY WHO HAS EVERYTHING?
WHAT DID YOU TWO DO?
GEEL.


WHAT DID YOU DO?
DAREDEVIL
PRIORITY IDENTIFICATION
I CAN'T ACCEPT THIS.
YOU HAVE BEEN CALLED.
THE CALL IS GIVEN.
BUT CAPTAIN AMERICA AND I ARE HARDLY SEEING EYE TO EYE--
THIS AIN'T HIS AVENGERS. THIS IS *MY* AVENGERS.
OKAY, WELL, I THOUGHT YOU AND I WERE ON THE OUTS, TOO.
HONESTLY, WE REALLY LIKE WHERE YOUR HEAD IS AT LATELY.
WE LIKE WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO DO WITH YOUR LIFE.
AND, HELLO, WE LIKE YOU.
TRY IT OUT. DON'T SAY NO.
FREE FOOD.


SO WHO IS A WORTHY AVENGER THEN?
HOW ABOUT A SELFLESS SAMURAI WARRIOR.
OR A MISUNDERSTOOD HERO WHO NEVER GIVES UP.
A CUNNING MILITARY MIND FROM ANOTHER CULTURE.
A TRUE MASTER AND PROTECTOR OF THE MYSTIC ARTS.
AN UNBREAKABLE URBAN WARRIOR.
A FUTURIST.
THE BEST SECRET AGENT IN THE WORLD.
THE BEST MARKSMAN ON THE PLANET.
AND...
A SWASHBUCKLING NINJA WHO CAN'T SAY NO TO A FRIEND.
NEXT: OSBORN RISES!

FEAR ITSELF HAMMERS THE AVENGERS!

The Red Skull's daughter has unleashed an evil as old as Midgard itself: The Serpent has risen to reclaim Earth, recruiting seven of its most powerful superhumans as his advance guard, the Worthy. The result is all-out action in classic Avengers style! The Thing vs. Red Hulk! Spider-Woman vs. Hulk! Steve Rogers vs. Master Man! And Squirrel Girl vs. the Red Skull's Nazi hordes?! Plus: What happens when Daredevil, the Man Without Fear, stands up to fear itself?

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"*FEAR ITSELF* IS ABLE TO NATURALLY FOLD INTO THE EVENTS OF THIS SERIES, AND THE RESULT IS BENDIS' STRONGEST AVENGERS BOOK IN QUITE SOME TIME."
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